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THE

EVANGELICAL MUSEUM.

No. 1.] FAYETTEVILLE, N. C.—JANUARY, 1828. [Vol. I.

INTRODUCTION.

The Editor of the Evangelical Museum commences his labours, with a very limited patronage. Having, however, embarked in this undertaking, from a sense of duty; and having chiefly at heart, the promotion of the best of causes, he is not discouraged; but, in humble reliance on the strength and grace of Him, without whose gracious aid, all human efforts would be worse than vain, he has resolved to go on; and, as in the prosecution of his project, it will be his endeavour, as far as in him lies, to be found in the path of duty, he is content to leave the result with Him, who "has all "hearts in his hands; and who con-"ducteth them whithersoever he "will, as the rivers of waters are "turned."

While he is sensible of the importance af being moderate in his promises; he yet thinks it proper to intimate, that he has no desire whatever, to he considered as exempted, by any reservation here made, from the obligation of exerting himself to the utmost, to render the Evangelical Museum, an agreeable vehicle of interesting instruction and intelligence, contributing at once to the entertainment and improvement of those who peruse its pages.

That his patrons may be furnished with a record, to which, on any future occasion, they may refer, for the purpose of ascertaining the extent of their claims, he deems it expedient here to insert his

PROSPECTUS.

"The utility of a work of this kind, if judiciously conducted, must be so obvious to every seriously reflecting mind, as not to admit of the smallest doubt: and, as no such publication now exists in North-Carolina, the Editor is encouraged to hope, that, on this account, if on no other, his design will be patronised, for the present at least, by the bulk of his fellow-christians throughout the state.

Without public patronage, a work of this kind cannot be carried on with sufficient energy and effect; but, on the continuance of such patronage, when commenced, the Editor cannot calculate, unless the

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work itself should convince the public that it is deserving of their united support. Whether this is to be the case, as respects the work now on hand, is yet to be ascertained. Awaiting this event, the design and plan of the *Museum* are now, with all due deference, submitted to the friends of Evangelical truth.

To disseminate the knowledge of sacred truth, and to excite a growing taste for improvement in that knowledge, which is able, through faith in Jesus Christ, to make us wise unto salvation, will be the Editor's leading objects in conducting the work here projected. It shall be his care to see that the character of the work shall correspond with the title he has chosen for it.

The *Museum* shall contain,—Essays on various topics of Theology;—Biographical sketches of persons eminent for their piety and worth;—Occasional remarks on Ecclesiastical History;—Reviews of new Theological publications;—Obituary notices of distinguished Christians, or of persons whose dying exercises may be found calculated to convey important instruction:—and Religious Intelligence.

As it is far better to exceed, than to fall short of excited expectations, the Editor *promises nothing original.* He thinks that, by a judicious selection from the rich variety of Evangelical matter to which he will have access, including the best religious periodical works that are now published, both in this country and in Great Britain, he can make the Museum an interesting Magazine. By this, however, he is far from wishing it to be understood that he designs to *exclude* from his miscellany every thing original.—On the contrary, he reserves to himself the privilege of inserting in the publication here contemplated, whatever original matter he may think it will be for edification to publish; and he hereby cordially invites his brethren in the ministy, and such other individuals as may have sufficient leisure and capacity for the purpose, to furnish him, from time to time, with such original articles as may promote his design.

CONDITIONS.

I. "The Evangelical Museum" shall be comprised in a pamphlet of about 48 pages octavo; it shall be folded and stitched in covers; it shall appear in the beginning of each month; and shall be sent to subscribers, either by mail, or by such other conveyance as they may direct.

II. The price, to subscribers, shall be Three Dollars per annum, payable in advance. The subscription, for the first year, to be paid on subscribing; and that for each succeeding year, so long as the publication may continue, payable, by those who choose to continue their subscription, after the delivery of the first number, on the demand or application of a special Agent, whom the Editor intends to employ for that purpose.

III. Twelve numbers shall constitute a volume; and the last number shall be accompanied by a Title Page and Table of Contents, for the benefit of those who wish to

preserve their numbers for binding.

IV. As an inducement to the members of the Synod of North-Carolina, to patronise this work, the Editor hereby engages, that, should the annual profits thereof, after deducting all its necessary expenses, amount to $1500, $500 of said profits shall be placed at the disposal of said Synod, for benevolent purposes; and should the said profits fall short of $1500, but exceed $1000, whatever part thereof may exceed the last mentioned sum, shall be appropriated as here proposed."

To the above proposals, it is scarcely necessary to add, that the Editor holds himself, personally responsible, for the Doctrinal sentiments which his Miscellany may contain. His conscientious views of the great and leading doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures, are fully contained, and happily expressed, in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church in the United States of America. This Evangelical Confession of Faith, he has twice subscribed, *ex animo;* and he deems it his duty here to announce his determination, to admit nothing into the pages of this work, that shall appear to him, to contradict or contravene, either directly or indirectly, any Doctrine contained in that excellent Digest of Evangelical truth. He solicits the prayers of his Brethren in the Ministry, and of all the friends of the Redeemer, that it may please the God of all grace, to make this work an instrument in his own hands, in promoting the salvation of precious souls;—in the conviction and conversion of sinners;—in building up Christians in their most holy faith; and in promoting, in various ways, the great interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

THEOLOGY.

From the London Evangelical Magazine.

A NEW YEAR'S MEDITATION.

'*One thing is needful.*' (Luke x. 42.)

These are the words of Him who spake as never man spake. If we can form to ourselves any conception of the majesty, yet the benignity—the mildness, yet the force—of our Lord's reproof to Martha, let us endeavor to lay it to heart.

He evidently contrasted the *one* indispensable object, with the *many* things by which Martha's attention was divided, and her temper agitated. The fault is too common, even among those of whom we hope things (as of her) that accompany salvation, to need explanation. Her immediate temptation to it was 'much serving.' It is the only instance, in which the family of Lazarus is adverted to by any of the first three Evangelists: and it might be the first occasion on which our Lord was accompanied to Bethany by *all* his disciples. The family was respectable and hospitable. The Jews from the festival at Jeru-

salem, crowded to see one who had been raised from his sepulchre; much provision might be needful, but Martha indulged needless anxiety, perhaps about their variety, their delicacy, or their arrangement. Is nothing like this ever apparent at the hospitable meetings of Christian friends? A substantial, but more simple entertainment, would doubtless have been more acceptable to Christ: and ought it not to be so to his people? Profusion cannot but impede beneficence.

It is unlikely that Mary would have neglected to help her sister in any thing that was really wanted; and still more so, if she had, that Christ would have commended her. She was imbibing his invaluable instructions, while Martha was bustling, fretting, and complaining, against her to their dearest and greatest friend. How must Martha have been humbled, and Mary encouraged by his award!

Mary, then, it appears, had 'chosen' this one thing needful, from which her sister's attention had been diverted by many things. Let us rejoice, that it was 'not to be taken from her:' for assuredly, no more shall it be from *any* who choose it as their portion. But *what* is it? We cannot, with our Lord's personal friends and followers, sit at his feet, and listen to the gracious words that always flowed from his lips. Neither could any of them at all times, enjoy that privilege: but Mary's conduct, at that time, was the effect of her *habitual* choice of 'the one thing needful;' and it is well when *ours* equally tends to the attainment of it.

Pious and learned men have variously defined the one thing needful, but the differences are those of sound rather than of signification. Admitting mankind to be altogether in a *lost* condition; *salvation* is the one thing needful for all. Its foundation was laid before that of the world to which it related, by God's election of grace, to save sinners through the sacrifice of his Son; who, in the fulness of time became incarnate, gave himself for us, to endure the death of the Cross; and bore the chastisement of our peace, that we, by his stripes might be healed. But these facts, like all in the performance of which *we* have had no share, can only be beneficial to *us*, by the effect which our *belief* of them produces in our mind and conduct. To this purpose, the grace of God, as manifested by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, is no less needful, than it was, as manifested by the sacrifice of the Son of God for the pardon of all past offences. This, therefore, to each of us, is the one thing needful, that the *love of God* should be shed abroad *in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. This* drew Mary to the feet of Jesus; to listen to his doctrine: the *want* of this gave scope to the cares and passions of Martha.

Let us bring such a couclusion to the test of our past and present experience. Have our minds ever been harrassed and perplexed by controversial reading, till the Scriptures themselves seemed to us either unintelligible, or of doubtful authority? *What* was it, that at once banished all our anxieties on the subject, and left us as incapable of doubting the truth of Scripture as our own existence? 'The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.'

In times of imminent danger, *what* has raised us above personal fear, and turned our dismay into a joy unspeakable and full of glory? And while this has been mingled with earnest intercession for others, evidently unfit for eternity, yet likely, every moment with ourselves, to plunge into its abyss; *what* has assured us, that our cries and tears for their preservation, were accepted of God? His 'love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.'

In weeks of motionless confinement to a bed of disease, *what* has incapacitated us to form a wish for relief, or for any change from what we then were? 'The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.'

When overwhelmed by sudden distress or loss, attended by permanent, and even irreparable damage —prostrated before God in dismay and terror, by the violence of these unlooked for strokes of his rod–*what* has said, 'Peace! Be still!' and immediately there was a great calm? —*Other* things, while these trials continued, you *could* not be anxious about. No more were you about *these*, while 'the love of God was shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost.'

But now, perhaps, you find your strength to be perfect weakness. Accumulated infirmities, complicated diseases, have reduced your mind to a state in which it is distressingly agitated, when you can hardly tell the cause, though its effect, in the aggravation of bodily diseases is perfectly felt. Such a state is perhaps, equally beyond help from rational exertion, or friendly consolation: but it is *not* beyond the reach of the one thing needful. The Holy Ghost can even *then* 'diffuse the love of God in the heart;' and nothing *more* is wanted, be things however they may, to assimilate earth to heaven. 'Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God! and not only so, but we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed:' or our hope of the glory of God cannot be ill-founded, 'because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.'—Rom. v. 1—5.

From the Spirit and Manners of the Age.
[An English Publication.]

CAUSES

WHICH INCREASE THE PREJUDICES OF WORLDLY MEN AGAINST RELIGION.

It is impossible for any one who truly loves, embraces, honors, and defends Christianity, to remain indifferent while he beholds her covered with reproach and contempt. He sees, with deep regret, the operation of those causes, which excite and inflame the enmity of the carnal mind. He sighs, and sheds many a tear in secret, when he finds religion wounded in the house of her friends.

The latent aversion of the depraved heart to every thing spiritually good, will easily account for much of that opposition which worldly men manifest to vital godliness; but it deserves inquiry, whether their antipathies are not augmented by the conduct of Christians themselves. The poison every where exists, and often lies in a dormant state; but the virulence of its action, the rage with which it spreads and operates, may, in general, be traced to certain excitements.

1. We have reason to believe that many Christian professors increase the prejudice of worldly men, by a coldness and gloomy reserve in their manners. Though religion is the only source of solid comfort and lasting joy, we must confess, that not a few individuals, avowedly and perhaps sincerely attached to it; give little proof of its happy influence upon themselves. Their fears predominate, their comforts are outweighed by their troubles, they are oftener walking in the chilling shade than in the cheering sunshine, and their sighs are more commonly heard than their songs. Persons of this character may be serious and conscientious, may even at times feel an earnestness and deep interest in the sacred engagements of

closet devotion, but their social intercourse is flat and insipid. Whether they are ill informed with reference to the grand doctrines and gracious provisions of the Gospel, and as yet detained in partial thraldom; or whether constitutional temperament gives a tinge of melancholy to the mind; or whatever other cause may be assigned, religion in their deportment has a meagre and uninviting aspect. Their language is uncouth, harsh, repulsive, full of censures and complaints; their life is a dull routine of tame and tiresome formalities. Is it surprising, that persons of this description should raise in the minds of worldly men an unfavourable idea of religion? The system is charged with the faults of those who espouse it. Hence the hasty conclusion is drawn, that Christian principles darken the lustre, and damp the vivacity of youth; that they infuse a leaven, which sours both the mind and the manners which yield to their influence. Such reasoning is, indeed, unfair, for examples of cheerful and attractive piety are always to be found; but prejudice is not very anxious to discriminate. Let those who sincerely wish to promote the cause of God in an evil world, beware of furnishing its enemies with a plausible plea, by exhibiting in their conduct and conversation any gloom, moroseness, or austerity, which has a direct tendency to alienate and disgust. Let them be firm and steadfast, yet uniformly kind and courteous; spreading the charm of a winning affability and benevolence over all the social circle in which it is their lot to move. By ease, freedom, cheerfulness, and suavity, under the control of a vigilant discretion, they will be able to adorn and recommend the doctrine of God their Saviour, and silence the clamour of many of its enemies.

2. Many professing Christians increase the prejudices of worldly men by the inconsistencies they betray in their commercial dealings. One is hard and rigid in the bargains he makes, in the conditions he prescribes, yet lax and remiss in fulfilling the engagements into which he has entered; another is mean and mercenary in trifles, though upright and honorable in matters of prime importance. Hence is seen a spirit of speculation and eager competition, which breaks down every mound of prudence and moderation; there a gross want of diligence, order, and punctuality, which brings embarrassment and ruin. "These are your religious people," cries the scoffer, with an air of exultation and triumph.

It cannot, and must not be disguised, that numbers have assumed a Christian profession for selfish and sinister purposes. To this concession should be subjoined the fair and legitimate inference it warrants, namely, that if religious principle did not generally raise and improve the tone of morals, such instances of hypocrisy would be unknown; there would, in fact, be neither grounds to sustain, nor motives to produce them, But the culpable manner in which even some sincere Christians carry on trade, may greatly dishonor and injure the religion they profess, It ought, therefore, to be every good man's prayer and aim, to manage his business with such clear rectitude, exact punctuality, and uniform consistency, as shall shut out occasion from those who are eagerly seeking occasion to cast scandal and reproach on the cause of God. Frequent omissions will have an effect nearly as bad as direct and palpable violations of moral duty; and the want of consideration be readily confounded with the want of principle. "What do ye more than others?" is a taunt thrown at the servants of God, whenever any negligence on their part opens a tempting avenue for it.

3. Many professing Christians increase the prejudices of worldly people by their injudicious zeal in supporting or defending those noble institutions, which at once do honor to our own country, and bless the world at large. They are seen stepping out of their own sober and proper course, to attempt a career, for which they are neither qualified by talents nor influence. Their measures are rash and ill judged; their movements wild, irregular, impetuous, and offensive. Whether opposed or encouraged, they are sure to run into extravagancies and absurdities. A Christian of enlarged mind and candid spirit will make every fair allowance in such cases. Their motives, says he, are good, but I regret the absence of a sound judgment, a due degree of experience, or a cautious adherence to the rules of prudence. Right principles and benevolent dispositions are too valuable to be thrown away or despised, because they are unhappily blended with some portion of alloy. On the contrary, the men of the world are not disposed to make any allowances. They assault the vulnerable points of such warm hearted but weak advocates of a good cause, with the keenest promptitude and the highest exultation. Having culled a few instances of a kind suited to their purpose, they hold up these fanatics as specimens and fair average samples of the religious world. Now, as the disposition of multitudes to misrepresent and degrade the Christian character is so clearly evident, how watchful and circumspect ought they to be, who profess themselves the zealous followers of our Lord Jesus Christ! How amiable and engaging in their manners, how fair and equitable in their dealings, how cautious and considerate in their benevolent exertions! It is not enough that their motives be right; they must shun the very appearance of evil. The end does not, according to an old exploded maxim, justify the means. A good object, pursued in a bad temper, or in a violent and indiscreet manner, cannot really advance the interests of religion. It should therefore be the constant study, the ardent and unwearied endeavour, of pious men, to hold forth the word of truth in their conduct, and to exhibit to the eyes of all, those fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

R.

LECTURES

On the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines—Addressed to Youth.—By The Rev. *Ashbel Green, D.D.* which were originally published in the Christian Advocate;—with valuable additions, extracted by the Editor of this work, from various authors of eminence.*

LECTURE I.

Friends and Brethren. It is with peculiar pleasure that I meet you on this occasion. I meet you to enter on a service intended for the benefit of the young—a service which I have always considered as one of the most important, and which I have certainly found one of the most delightful, among all the duties of the ministerial vocation.

The discussions on which we are entering will be freely open to those of every age, who may choose to attend them. But it will be distinctly kept in mind, that they are specially intended for youth, and will be addressed to them alone. It is my earnest wish that the young may consider themselves as the parties to whom I directly speak—speak with a view to explain, defend and inculcate those great doctrines of our holy religion with

* The additions here referred to, are inclosed within crotchets, thus [ ].

which they are supposed to have already some acquaintance, and on a practical regard to which the salvation of their souls depends. There is, moreover, a certain method of treatment and style of address, which are proper when subjects are discussed for the special benefit of the young, which would not be equally proper, if those of more advanced age were included with them in the views of the speaker. These lectures are not to be profound and abstruse theological disquisitions. It is, indeed, an important part of their design to enable every attentive hearer to judge of the soundness and scriptural evidence of the doctrines of our catechism, so as to be able to give a reason for his Christian faith and hope. But the lectures require to be of a *popular* character—in manner affectionate and tender—the manner which should characterize all religious addresses to the young—and directed, throughout, to a practical application of the truth illustrated.

It cannot be unknown to the most of you, my young friends, that objections have been made and strenuously urged, against the propriety of the whole proceeding on which we are now entering. It is proper for my own justification, therefore, to show that these objections are unfounded; and proper to endeavour to remove them from your minds, if they have an existence there; or if they have not, to enable you to answer them satisfactorily, when you meet with them, as you probably will, in reading or conversation. The remainder of this lecture, then, shall be employed in stating and obviating the objections to which I have alluded; in giving you a very brief account of the origin of our Shorter Catechism; and with a few remarks of a practical import.

There are, I think, *three* objections to such a system of instruction as that which I propose to give, and wish you to receive. The objections, indeed, involve each other, but we will consider them separately.

The first is, that the human mind ought not to be preoccupied and biassed, by being taught the principles of any religious creed or system, whatsoever; but be left perfectly free and unprejudiced, that it may, at a proper time, impartially judge and adopt for itself, those religious tenets which shall appear most rational, and free from error. It is my wish to state the objection in all its strength, and so stated it may seem specious. But, to my apprehension, it is so far from being solid and conclusive, that I must say, I think no objection was ever more fallacious and unfounded than this. It seems to me that it is made in direct opposition to some of the plainest laws and indications of our nature. Nothing can be more evident than that it is the appointment of the Creator—with which it is equally useless and impious to contend—that the condition of children, especially in early life, shall be almost identified with that of their parents. The previous condition of parents decides whether children shall be born with a sickly or with a healthful constitution; with, or without, a tendency to hereditary disease; whether the natural disposition shall be benignant, or irascible; whether they shall exist in savage, or in civilized society; whether they shall be bond or free; whether they shall be rich or poor; whether they shall be instructed or remain in ignorance; whether they shall be brought up in virtue, or in vice; whether they shall be Pagans, Christians, Jews, or Mahometans. In all these respects, parents and children are linked together, by the appointment of the Creator; and, quarrel with the appointment as we may, we can neither deny it; nor change it. The proper use to be made of the unquestionable fact, I shall hereafter notice. I thus state and dilate upon it a little, because it is, on several accounts, important to be observed and remembered; as well as because it is closely connected with the proper answer to the objection before us. It shows incontrovertibly, that parents must, *in all respects*, have much to do with forming the minds of their children. Man, indeed, as all the moral writers on this subject observe, is evidently intended by his Maker, to owe the development and improvement of all his powers, to instruction and imitation; and not, like the brutes, to instinct. Brutes reach the perfection of their natures, chiefly from instinctive propensities; and hence, many of them would really be far superior to man without instruction——if, indeed, without instruction, man could even reach the age of maturity. And shall the human mind be, at first, almost wholly indebted to parental instruction, for information on every other subject, and be left entirely without it on the most important of all subjects—the subject of religion—the knowledge of God and of the duty due to him—Knowledge, too, which we originally receive, in a great measure, from express revelation; and which therefore can never be possessed unless it be communicated? Shall nothing be said to children on this subject? Judge for yourselves, if any thing can be more preposterous? And if you begin to teach, how much will you teach, and where will you stop? Will you not be willing to teach all that you know? Ought you not to do so? Can you often, or easily avoid it—unless you refuse to answer the inquiries which children make?

Consider likewise what would be the effect, in the matter of *prejudice*, of refusing to teach children the principles and duties of religion. Would they, if in this matter left to themselves, really grow up without any prepossessions, in regard to this momentous subject? By no means—They would, on the contrary—and facts prove it—either contract a total indifference or contempt for all religion, or else, acquire the most false and pernicious notions—fortified, it is probable, by the strongest prejudices: For I think we are generally more attached to opinions which we have elaborated for ourselves, than to those which we recollect that we received from others; especially if our minds have been puffed up with the belief that, on a given subject, we are fully competent to be our own teachers, and that to be so is to be spirited and magnanimous.

On the whole, the objection rests on an assumption which is entirely and manifestly false—the assumption that the human mind can best guide itself, in acquiring religious knowledge and principles; and that it will be less prejudiced and more likely to judge correctly, if left without instruction, than if instruction be imparted. The objection we consider is, moreover, diametrically opposed to the inspired precept of the wisest of men—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In like manner, it contravenes what St. Paul mentions, with decisive approbation, as the method of Timothy's education—that "from a child he had known the holy scriptures"—But especially, let not what the apostle adds be forgotten—that these scriptures "are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Blessed be God, we have some unequivocal examples of the most amiable practical piety, in children at a very early age—at an age, at which those who advocate this objection, would think it too early for children to think of religion at all. And can Christian parents who know the worth of the soul, see their children live to this age, or know that

they may die before they reach it, and yet not give them any just notions of God, and the way of salvation through a Redeemer? The thought is intolerable. It ought not to be endured for a moment.

Doubtless, parents and other teachers should, as far and as fast as children can understand the reason of what they teach, give a reason for all they teach—The present course of lectures is delivered with this very design. Doubtless, also, youth ought to reason for themselves, with suitable modesty and diffidence: and to this, my young friends, I earnestly invite you in your attendance on all that I deliver. Hear what is said with candour and attention; ask of the Father of lights to guide and counsel you; and acting thus, judge for yourselves—remembering always that, at last, you must answer for yourselves.

But from what has been said on this objection, it certainly does follow, that parents have a high and awful responsibility, in regard to the religious instruction and education of their children. As children must derive their religious knowledge and sentiments from their parents, or if not instructed, acquire bad and perhaps ruinous sentiments, how careful and how anxious should parents be, that they neither neglect to teach their offspring, nor teach them any thing that is not true and useful. Every Christian parent should keep constantly in mind, that the eternal welfare of his children, as well as their present happiness, may depend on the religious and moral instruction which they receive in their early years—never forgetting that example teaches even more powerfully than precept; and that without example all precepts will probably be of little avail.

Children and youth, also, should recollect that they have cause for the liveliest gratitude to the God of providence, for giving them their existence in a Christian country, and granting them the privilege and benefit of a Christian education—an early instruction in the doctrines of divine revelation. This is the use, to which I have alluded, that they ought to make of the fact, that the destinies of children are closely connected with those of their parents. Guard, my young friends, against cavilling at the divine appointment in this respect—guard against perplexing your minds with deep and subtle questions on this subject: for they lead to nothing but doubt, and scepticism, and perhaps to atheism at last. One thing is clear—yours is a happy lot, which calls for gratitude and improvement. Leave to God, who you know can do no wrong, the order of his own government; the disposal of his own creatures, and of all that concerns them. For yourselves, be thankful to him, that you have been born of Christian parents, who have early taught you the knowledge of your Maker and Redeemer. Count it among your richest blessings, that, from the very dawn of reason, your minds received information in regard to the things that belong to your everlasting peace; and that your pious parents or friends, have been constantly endeavouring, by their counsels, their prayers, and their example, to form you to piety, and to lead you to Heaven. While your sympathies are awakened for the heathen and the uninstructed, fail not to recollect that your responsibility is infinitely greater than theirs; and that if you perish, amidst all the light and religious advantages which you enjoy, your perdition will be inconceivably more dreadful than that which you deprecate for them. Towards those who have not had a birth so propitious, and privileges so distinguished as yours, cultivate by all means, the compassion and benevolence which the gospel enjoins. This comprises your duty to them. Join heartily and actively, in all plans and endeavours to instruct the ignorant, to reclaim the vicious, and to send the gospel to to those who have not yet heard the name of a Saviour.

The second objection which I propose to notice, is—that in teaching and learning a catechism, and by making the answers in that catechism the text of lectures, we substitute a human composition for the holy scriptures—nay, that we even set the words of men above the word of God. This objection, like the former, rests, we are confident, entirely on a false assumption. And if those who urge the objection do not know that the assumption is false—as we would fain believe they do not—they must, at least, be chargeable with great ignorance. They could not read even the second answer of the catechism on which I am to lecture, without seeing that a fundamental point which we are to maintain is, that nothing has any authority in religion but the revealed will of God—"That the word of God, contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the ONLY RULE to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him." It would be strange indeed, if in the very act of teaching that the scriptnres are the ONLY rule of faith and practice, we should set up another, and a superior rule, in their place. No, my young friends, it is no doctrine of our church, nor of any member of it ever known to me, that its Confession of Faith and Catechisms are superior to the Bible, or that they make any addition to it, or that they are any thing without it. On the contrary, not only in the snswer I have recited, but in various other places, they teach and inculcate that the scriptnres *alone* are to be considered as authoritative, in all that relates to religion, and in all that is binding on conscience. No men that ever lived, were more strenuous advocates for these sentiments, than those who formed our standards. Hence they took care to have that done, which has not been done by some other Christian communions—I mean, that the scripture proofs should be added—point by point—to every clause of their Confession and Catechisms; that it might be seen that the whole rested, as they believed, on the word of God; and to enable every reader to see and judge for himself, whether the doctrines they laid down were not supported by a clear scriptural warrant. And I take this opportunity to say to you distinctly, that you ought, by all means, to compare all that you will hear from me, carefully and candidly, with the word of God. I shall endeavour to give you plain scripture proof for the doctrines I teach. But judge of my quotations from the scripture yourselves. If they do not amount to proof, let what I say, as grounded on them, stand for nothing—But if they amount to proof, then remember, that the doctrine is not mine, but that of our common Lord and Master, which none of us can reject but at our peril. It would be perfectly practicable for me to take plain passages of scripture, as texts for all that I propose to say; and then to give the answer in the Catechism, as the expression of the doctrinal truth of those texts, and proceed to discourse upon it accordingly. This is a method which has been, I think, adopted by some, and has been matter of deliberation with myself. But on the whole, it seems to me a method by far the most natural, brief, and easy, to state the doctrine or proposition, in the first place, and then to allege the proofs from scripture, for the several parts of it in detail. This is certainly not a method inconsistent with fair and conclusive reasoning. It is a method precisely similar to this, which is pursued in all mathematical demonstrations. It is also the very method adopted in our courts of justice; where the advocate first

states what he expects to prove, then brings forward and examines his evidence, and afterwards reasons to show that the evidence adduced has established his position. In a word, when it is admitted on all hands, as in the case before us, that the doctrine and the scriptural proof must go together, it would seem to be a very cavilling spirit, which makes it matter of offence, or objection, that the proof is not stated before the doctrine, rather than the doctrine before the proof.

The framers of our catechism unquestionably had texts of scripture directly in view, in every answer that they formed; and from a careful consideration of those texts they formed the answer—exactly as a preacher now raises a doctrine from the text which he reads. We only take the reverse order, and first repeat the doctrine, and then support it by the texts.

["A church Creed professes to be, merely an *epitome or summary exhibition* OF WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH. It professes to be deduced from the scriptures, and to refer to the scriptures for the whole of its authority. Of course, when any one subscribes it, he is so far from dishonouring the Bible, that he does publick homage to it. He simply declares, by a solemn act, how he understands the Bible; in other words, what doctrines he considers it as containing. In short, the language of an orthodox believer, in subscribing his ecclesiastical Creed, is simply of the following import.—'While the *Socinian* professes to believe the Bible, and to understand it as teaching the mere humanity of Christ:—while the *Arian* professes to receive the same Bible, and to find in it the Saviour represented as the most exalted of all creatures, but still a creature:—While the *Pelagian* and *Semi-Pelagian* make a similar profession of their general belief in the scriptures, and interpret them as teaching a doctrine, far more favourable to human nature, and far less honourable to the grace of God, than they appear to me really to teach;—I beg the privilege of declaring, FOR MYSELF, that, while I believe, with all my heart, that the bible is the word of God, the only perfect rule of faith and manners, and the only ultimate test in all controversies—it plainly teaches, as I read and believe—the deplorable and total depravity of human nature—the essential divinity of the Saviour—a Trinity of persons in the Godhead—justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ—and regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, as indispensable to prepare the soul for Heaven.—These I believe to be the radical truths which God hath revealed in his word; and while they are denied by some, and frittered away or perverted by others, who profess to believe that blessed word, I am verily persuaded they are the fundamental principles of the plan of salvation."

"Now, I ask, is there in all this language, any thing dishonourable to the Bible? Any thing that tends to supersede its authority; or to introduce a rule or a tribunal of paramount authority? Is there not, on the contrary, in the whole language and spirit of such a declaration, an acknowledgment of God's word as of ultimate and supreme authority; and an expression of belief in certain doctrines, SIMPLY and ONLY BECAUSE they are believed TO BE REVEALED IN THAT WORD? Truly, if THIS be dishonouring the scriptures, or setting up a standard above them, there is an end of all meaning either of words or actions.

"But still it is asked—'Where is the need of any definite declaration of what we understand the scriptures to teach? Are they not intelligible enough in themselves? Can we make them plainer than their Author has done? Why hold a candle to the sun? Why make an attempt to frame a more explicit test than He who gave the Bible has thought proper to frame:—an attempt, as vain as it is presumptuous?' To this plea it is sufficient to answer, that, although the scriptures are undoubtedly simple and plain; so plain that 'he who runs may read;' yet it is equally certain that thousands do, in fact, mistake and misinterpret them. This cannot possibly be denied; because thousands interpret them, and that on points confessedly fundamental, not only in *different*, but in directly *opposite* ways. Of course all cannot be equally right. Can it be wrong, then, for a pious and orthodox man—or for a pious and orthodox church, to exhibit, and endeavour to recommend to others, their mode of interpreting the sacred volume? As the world is acknowledged, on all hands, to be, in fact, full of mistake and error as to the true meaning of holy scripture, can it be thought a superfluous task for those who have more light, and more correct opinions, to hold them up to view as a testimony to the truth, and as a guide to such as may be in error? Surely it cannot. Yet this is neither more nor less than precisely that formation and maintenance of a scriptural Confession of Faith for which I am pleading.

"Still, however, it may be asked, what *right* has any man, or set of men to interpose their authority, and undertake to deal out the sense of scripture for others? Is it not both impious in itself, and an improper assumption over the minds of our fellow men? I answer, this reasoning would prove too much, and therefore proves nothing. For, if admitted, it would prove that all PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL is presumptuous and criminal; because preaching always consists in explaining and enforcing scripture, and that, for the most part, in the words of the preacher himself. Indeed, if the objection before us were valid, it would prove that all the pious writings of the most eminent Divines, in all ages, who have had for their object to elucidate and apply the word of God, were profane and arrogant attempts to mend his revelation, and make it better fitted than it is, to promote its great design. Nay, further; upon the principle of this objection, it not only follows, that no minister of the gospel ought ever to do more in the pulpit than simply to READ OR TO REPEAT THE VERY WORDS OF SCRIPTURE; but it is equally evident, that he must read or repeat scripture to his hearers, ONLY IN THE LANGUAGES IN WHICH THEY WERE ORIGINALLY GIVEN TO THE CHURCH. For, as has been often observed, it cannot be said, that the words of any translation of the Bible are the very words of the Holy Spirit. They are only the words which uninspired men have chosen, in which to express, as nearly as they were able, the sense of the original. If, therefore, the objection before us be admitted, no man is at liberty to teach the great truths of revelation in any other way than by literally repeating the *Hebrew text* of the Old Testament, and the *Greek* of the New, in the hearing of the people. So extreme is the absurdity to which an erroneous principle will not fail to lead those who are weak enough, or bold enough to follow it to its legitimate consequences!

"But, after all, what language do FACTS speak on this subject? Are those individuals or churches, who have been most distinguished for their attachment and adherence to Creeds, more regardless of the Bible than other professing Christians? Do they appear to esteem the Bible less? Do they read it less? Do they appeal to it less frequently, as their grand and ultimate authority? Do they quote it

more rarely, or with less respect in their preaching? Where they once refer to their Creeds or catechisms, for either authority or illustration, in the pulpit, do they not, notoriously, refer to the Bible a thousand times? Do they take less pains than others to impress the contents of the sacred volume on the minds of their children, and to hold it forth as the unceasing object of study to all? Look at the reformed churches of *Scotland* and *Holland*, of *France* and *Geneva*, in their best state, when their Confessions of Faith were most venerated, and had most power; and then say, whether any churches, since the days of the Apostles, ever discovered more reverence for the scriptures, or treated them with more devout regard, as the only perfect standard of faith and practice, than they? Nay, am I not warranted in making a similar appeal with respect to those churches in our land, which have been most distinguished for their attachment to Creeds? Are not their ministers, in general, quite as remarkable for very rarely quoting their own ecclesiastical formularies, for either proof or illustration, as they are for their constant and abundant quotations from scripture for both purposes? Can the same incessant and devout recurrence to the sacred oracles be ascribed with equal truth to the great body of the opposers of Creeds, in ancient or modern times? I will not press this comparison into further detail; but have no apprehension that even the bitterest enemy of Creeds, who has a tolerable acquaintance with facts, and the smallest portion of candour, will venture to say that the result, fairly deduced, is in favour of his cause."]*

But the truth is, that those who contend with us here rely chiefly on a *Third objection*, which is, that no creed or catechism ought to be formed, or taught, or explained, but what consists of the very words of scripture. This it is supposed is strong ground, which those who take believe they can maintain against all opposition. We think otherwise—and very willingly assign our reasons for believing it right, that every Christian denomination should have a formula of faith, expressed, generally, in different words from those of the sacred text. For this we assign, as our first reason, that our practice is very favourable, if not essential, to harmony, order and peace, among those who endeavour to walk together in Christian fellowship; and that it does, in fact, no more than secure—as far as it can be secured—the right which every Christian possesses, to know whether his brother holds what he esteems the fundamental truths of Christianity; and, of course, whether there can be real communion, or fellowship, between them or not.

Every sect that bears the Christian name professes to take the scriptures as the rule of faith, and to derive its religious tenets from them. And could a community, formed out of all these sects, walk together in Christian fellowship and church order? The thing, as I apprehend, is absolutely impossible; because in instances not a few, a part of this community would maintain as essential truths and duties, what another part would strenuously oppose, as the grossest error and the most abominable impiety. A Roman Catholick, for example, would hold communion with none who denied that the sacramental elements, after consecration, became the real body and blood of Christ; and the protestant, to say the least, would not choose to commune with any one who maintained this tenet. The Trinitarian would insist on paying divine honours to his Saviour; and the Unitarian would denounce this as idolatry. The orthodox would contend

* Dr. Miller.

that the atonement of Christ is the only safe reliance of a sinner for acceptance with God; and in this he would be contradicted by those who reject the doctrine of atonement, as one of the worst corruptions of Christianity. One party would be zealous for the baptism of its infant offspring; and another as zealous in opposing it. One section of this strange community would insist that no ordinances were valid, which were not administered by men tracing their authority to an alledged succession from the apostles; and another would assert that this was altogether absurd and impossible.

It seems to me, that not one of the parties concerned could be happy or contented, in such a connexion. If any could, it is certain that those could not who hold—as many do hold—that they cannot, and ought not, to be in Christian communion, or recognise as Christians at all, those who reject what they believe to be the fundamentals of religion. To say that this is mere narrowness and bigotry, is to take for granted the whole matter in dispute. The opposite party maintain that they are bound "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and that they do no more than this, in refusing communion with those who hold radical and ruinous errors. There must be, then, some mutual understanding among the members of a religious communion, as to the manner in which they interpret the language, and receive the doctrines and ordinances of revelation. Accordingly, there is not, so far as my knowledge extends, a religious sect in Christendom, the existing members of which do not, *in some form or other*, take measures to ascertain whether an individual, hitherto a stranger, and now proposing to become one of their number, holds those things which they deem essential to his being a good and profitable member of their community. They satisfy themselves of this, at least before they admit him to *all* the rights, privileges, and influence, of complete membership. This is effected, in some communions, by each individual, before partaking of the Lord's Supper, giving a statement, either verbally or in writing, of the leading articles of his belief, and his views of a Christian profession; of which his brethren judge, and receive or reject him accordingly. But this, you perceive at once, is no more than requiring every individual to make a Confession of Faith for himself. We think it far preferable to have one that has been drawn up, with the greatest deliberation, by men of eminent ability and piety—which every one may examine at his leisure, and before he adopts it, weigh every part of it with the utmost care. As to forcing this creed on those who dislike it, none are more opposed to it than the members of our church: and none do more sincerely rejoice, that we live in a country where no civil pains or penalties can be inflicted for refusing any creed whatever. At the same time, we do regard it as utterly unbecoming the spirit of a man and of a Christian, for any individual to disguise his religious opinions, and by so doing to obtain a standing in our church; or to retain a standing and influence already acquired, when he is conscious that he is decidedly hostile to some of the leading articles of our faith and ecclesiastical order. In a word, then, our Catechisms and Confessions of Faith are intended to declare the manner in which we understand the scriptures—a declaration which every church has certainly a right to make—which we have seen must be made, and is in fact made, in some way or other, by all religious denominations, with a view to secure unanimity and cordiality. Those who are agreed with us in

our understanding of the scriptures, we take into communion as brothers and sisters; and those who cannot agree with us, we leave with the common privilege of forming a communion for themselves with those with whom they can harmonize. Is this a bigoted, narrow; or unreasonable system? We think not.

To these three objections with the answers which accompany them, the Editor takes the liberty to add, the statement of four more, with appropriate answers, as contained in the Lecture of Dr. Miller, already quoted

["Another objection frequently made to church Creeds is, that they INTERFERE WITH THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE, AND NATURALLY LEAD TO OPPRESSION. 'What right,' say those who urge this objection, 'has any church, or body of churches, to impose a Creed on me, or dictate to me what I shall believe? To attempt such dictation is tyranny; to submit to it, is to surrender the right of private judgment.'

"There would be some ground for this objection, if a Creed were, in any case, *imposed*, by the civil government, or by an established church; if any were *obliged* to receive it, under heavy pains and disabilities, whether they approved it or not. But as such a case does not, and, happily, *cannot* exist in our favoured country, the objection is surely as illegitimate in reasoning, as it is false in fact. One is tempted to suspect that those who urge such an objection among *us*, have found it manufactured to their hands, by persons living under civil governments and ecclesiastical establishments of an oppressive character; and viewing it as a weapon which might be wielded with much popular effect, they have taken it into their service and thenceforward refused to abandon it: though proved a thousand times to have no more application to any Creed or church in the *United States*, than to the inhabitants of another planet."

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"But, perhaps, it will be asked, when a man has *already become* a member, or minister of a church, in virtue of a voluntary and honest subscription to her articles, and afterwards alters his mind;—if he be excluded from her communion as a private member, or deposed from office as a minister, is not here 'oppression?' Is it not inflicting on a man a 'heavy penalty, for his 'opinions;' 'punishing' him for his 'sincere, conscientious convictions?'—I answer, if the Lord Jesus, Christ has not only authorised, but solemnly commanded his church to cast the heretical, as well as immoral, out of her communion, and wholly to withdraw her countenance from those who preach 'another gospel;'—then it is manifest, that the church, in acting on this authority, does no one any injury. In excluding a private member from the communion of the church, or deposing a minister from office, in the regular and scriptural exercise of discipline, she deprives neither of any natural right. It is only withdrawing that which was voluntarily asked, and voluntarily bestowed, and which might have been, without injustice, withheld. It is only practically saying—'You can no longer, consistently with our views, either of obedience to Christ, or of Christian edification, be a minister or a member with us. You may be as happy and as useful as you can in any other connexion; but we must take away that authority and those privileges which we once gave you, and of which your further exercise AMONG US would be subversive of those principles which we are solemnly pledged to each other to support.' Is this language unreasonable? Is the measure which it contemplates oppressive? Would it be more just in itself, or more favourable to the rights of conscience, if

any individual *could* retain his place as a teacher and guide in a church, contrary to its wishes; to the subversion of its faith; to the disturbance of its peace: and finally to the endangering of its existence; and all this contrary to his own solemn engagements, and to the distinct understanding of its members, when he joined them? Surely every friend of religious liberty would indignantly answer, No! Such a church would be the oppressed party, and such a member, the tyrant.

"The conclusion, then, is, that when a church makes use of a Creed in the manner that has been described; as a bond of union; as a barrier against what it deems heresy; and in conformity with what it conscientiously believes to be the will of Christ; it is so far from encroaching on the 'rights' of others; so far from being chargeable with 'oppression;'—that it is really, in the most enlightened manner, and on the largest scale, MAINTAINING THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE; and that for such a church, instead of doing this, to give up its own testimony to the truth and order of God's house; to surrender its own comfort, peace, and edification for the sake of complying with the unreasonable demands of a corrupt individual, would be to subject itself to the worst of slavery. What is the subjugation of the many, with all their interests, rights, and happiness to the dictation of one, or a few, but the essence of tyranny?

"Another objection often urged against subscription to Creeds and Confessions is, that it is UNFRIENDLY TO FREE INQUIRY. 'When a man,' say the enemies of Creeds, 'has once subscribed a public formulary, and taken his ecclesiastical stand with a church which requires it, he *must* continue so to believe to the end of life or resign his place; new light in abundance may offer itself to his view; but he must close his eyes against it. Now, can it be right, say they, for any one voluntarily to place himself in circumstances of so much temptation; willingly to place himself within the reach of strong inducements to tamper with conscience, and to resist conviction?"

"In answer to this objection, my *first* remark is, that when a man takes to himself the solemn and and highly responsible office of a public instructor of others, we must presume that he has examined the most important of the various creeds, called Christian, with all the deliberation, sincerity, and prayer, of which he is capable, and that he has made up his mind with respect to the leading doctrines of scripture. To suppose any one capable of entering on the duties of the ministerial office while he is wavering and unsettled, and liable to be 'carried about by every wind of doctrine,' is to suppose him both weak and criminal to a very great degree." * * *

"There can be no doubt, that every public act, by which a man pledges himself, even as a private member, to any particular denomination of Christians, interposes some obstacle in the way of his afterwards deserting that denomination, and uniting himself with another. And, perhaps, it may be said, the more delicate and honorable his mind, the more reluctant and slow he will be to abandon his old connexions, and choose new ones. So that such an one will really labour under a temptation to resist light, and remain where he is. But because this is so, shall a man, therefore, *never join any church;* never take any step that will, directly or indirectly, pledge his religious Creed or character, lest he should afterwards alter his mind, and be constrained to transfer his relation to a different body, and thus be liable to find himself embarrassed by his former steps?" * *

"There is no station in life in which its occupant does not find some peculiar temptation. But if he be a man of a right spirit, he will meet it with Christian integrity, and overcome it with Christian courage. If he be a truly honest man, he will be faithful to his God, and faithful to his own conscience at all hazards; and if he be not honest, he will not be very likely to benefit the church by his discoveries and speculations. Accordingly, the voice of history confirms this reasoning. On the one hand, how many thousand instances have the last two centuries afforded, of men who were willing to incur, not only obloquy and reproach, but also beggary, imprisonment, and even death itself, in their most frightful forms, rather than abandon the truth, and subscribe to formularies which they could not conscientiously adopt! On the other hand, how many instances have occured, within the last fifty years, of unprincipled men, after solemnly subscribing orthodox Creeds, disregarding their vows, and opposing the spirit of those Creeds, and still retaining their ecclesiastical stations, without reserve! It is plain, then, that this whole objection, though specious, has not the least solidity. Truly upright and pious men will always follow their convictions; while, with regard to those of an opposite character, their light, whether they remain or depart, will be found to be of no value, either to themselves, or the church of God.

"A further objection frequently brought against Creeds is, that they have ALTOGETHER FAILED OF ANSWERING THE PURPOSE PROFESSED TO BE INTENDED BY THEM. 'Churches,' it is said, 'which have Creeds the most carefully drawn, and of the most rigid character, are as far from being united in doctrinal opinions, as some which either have never had any Creeds at all, or have long since professedly omitted to enforce subscription to them. To mention only two examples; the church of *England*, for nearly three centuries, has had a set of Articles decisively Calvinistic, to which all her candidates for the ministry are required to subscribe; but we know that more than a hundred and fifty years have passed away, since Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian tenets began to pollute that important branch of the reformed church; and that within the last seventy-five or eighty years, almost every form of heresy has lurked under subscription to her orthodox Articles. And even the church of *Scotland*, which has had, for nearly two centuries, the most rigidly and minutely orthodox Confession on earth, is generally supposed, at this hour, to have a ministry far from being unanimous in loving and honouring her public standards. Now, if Creeds have not, in fact, been productive of the great benefit intended by them, even in some of the most favourable cases that can be produced, why be perplexed and burdened with them at all?"

"This objection evidently proceeds on the principle, that a remedy which does not accomplish *every thing*, is worth *nothing*. Because Creeds have not completely banished dissension and discord from the churches which have adopted them, therefore they have been of no use. But is this sound reasoning? Does it accord even with common sense, or with the dictates of experience in any walk of life? Because the constitutuion of the *United States* has not completely defended our country from all political animosity and strife; is it, therefore, worthless? Or should we have been more united and harmonious without any constitutional provisions at all?—Because the system of public law does not annihilate all crime, should we, of course, be as well without it? No one will say this. Nay, may not the objection be retorted on those who urge it? They contend that Creeds are unnecessary; that the Bible is amply sufficient for all purposes, as a test of truth. But has the Bible banished dissension and discord from the church? No one will pretend that it has. Yet why not? Surely not on account of any error or defect in itself; but on account of the folly and perverseness of depraved man, who, amidst all the provisions of infinite wisdom and goodness, is continually warring against the peace of the world.

"But I go further, and maintain that the history of the practical influence of Creeds, is strongly in their favour. Though they have not done *every thing* that could have been desired, they have done *much;* and much in those very churches which have been most frequently selected as examples of their entire want of efficacy. The Calvinistic articles of the church of *England* were the means of keeping her doctrinally pure, to a very remarkable degree, for the greater part of a hundred years." * *

"The very same representation, in substance, may be made concerning the church of *Scotland*. Her pre-eminently excellent Creed was the means, under God, of keeping her united and pure, as long as that Creed continued to be honestly employed as a test, according to its true intent and spirit. When this ceased to be the case, it would have been strange, indeed, if the state of things had remained as before. It did *not* so remain.—With lax and dishonest subscription, heresy came in:—at first, with reserve and caution, but afterwards more openly. But even to the present day, as all know who are acquainted with the state of that church, the movements of heresy within her bosom, are held in most salutary check; and her condition is incomparably more favourable than it could have been, had her public standards been long ago abolished.

Nor have the Creeds of those national churches of *Great Britain* yet accomplished all the benefits to the cause of truth and righteousness which they are destined to confer. Though their genuine spirit has been long since forgotton by many; this is by no means the case with all. There has constantly been, in both those churches, a body of faithful witnesses to the truth. This body, thanks to the Almighty and all-gracious King of Zion! is increasing. Their "good Confessions" form a RALLYING POINT, around which numbers are now gathering;—and those far-famed formularies, the favourable influence of which has been supposed by many to be long since exhausted, and more than exhausted, will again become, there is every reason to believe, an "ensign to the people," to which there shall be a flocking of those who love the "simplicity that is in Christ," more extensive and more glorious than ever before.

"Nor are we without significant attestations to the efficacy of Creeds, and to the mischief of being without them, in our own country. Of the *former*, the Presbyterian church in the *United States*, is one of the most signal examples. Conflicts she has, indeed, had; but they have been such as were incident to every community, ecclesiastical or civil, administered by the counsels of imperfect men. Amidst them all, she has, by the favour of her Divine Head, held on her way, substantially true to her system of doctrine and order; and though constituted, originally, by members from different countries, and of different habits, she has remained united to a degree, considering all things, truly wonderful. Of the *latter*, the Congregational churches of *Massachusetts*, furnish a melancholy memorial. Though original-

ly formed by a people, far more homogeneous in their character and habits, and far more united in their opinions; yet, being destitute of any efficient bond of union, and equally destitute of the means of maintaining it, if it had been possessed, they have fallen a prey to dissension and error, to a degree, equally instructive and mournful.

"The last objection which I shall consider is, that subscription to Creeds, has not only failed entirely of producing the benefits contemplated by their friends; but has rather been found to PRODUCE THE OPPOSITE EVILS:—TO GENERATE DISCORD AND STRIFE. "Creeds," say some, "instead of tending to compose differences, and to bind the members of churches more closely together, have rather proved a bone of contention, and a means of exciting mutual charges of heresy, and a thousand ill feelings, among those who might have been otherwise perfectly harmonious."

"In reply to this objection, my first remark is, that the alleged fact, which it takes for granted, is utterly denied. It is not true that Creeds have generated contention and strife in the bosom of those churches which have adopted them. On the contrary, it would be easy to show, by an extended induction of facts, that in those churches in which Creeds and Confessions have been most esteemed and most regarded, there union and peace have most remarkably reigned. In truth, it has ever been the *want* of faithful regard to such formularies, that has led to division and strife in the church of Christ. I doubt whether any denomination of christians ever existed, for half a century together, destitute of a public Creed, however united and harmonious it might have been, at the commencement of this period; without exhibiting, before the end of it, either that stillness of death, which is the result of cold indifference to the truth; or that miserable scene of discord, in which "parting asunder" was the only means of escaping from open violence."]*

Again,—Another use, and a very important one, of a catechism, or articles of faith, is to bring together, in proper order, all the principal truths and doctrines of the Bible; so that they may be seen at one view, and in a small compass. We believe that this is very advantageous to all our people, and especially to the young. Hence the practice so general in our church of requiring children and youth to commit accurately to memory, at least our shorter catechism—frequently, with the whole of our scripture proofs. If it be remarked that much of this catechism cannot be fully understood by children in their early years, it should be remembered, that this is no more than is true of almost all *elementary* instruction. Scarcely ever is it more than partially understood at first; but being treasured up in the memory, it is there for meditation, and investigation, and application, as the mind gradually advances in knowledge and in strength. Parents and teachers, as I have already had occasion to remind you, should explain the catechism to their children, as far as is practicable. To explain it more fully, and to apply it practically, is what I am to attempt in these lectures; which I am sure will be heard with far greater interest, and better comprehension, by those who have learned the catechism, than by those who have not.

It is, without doubt, a wise order that the sacred volume should be given to us exactly as we have received it, with its doctrines, and precepts, and institutions connected with history and biography, and poetry and proverbs, and prophecy, and epistolary writings. But will any one contend that it is either unlawful or unprofitable, to select from the different parts of the sacred volume, the chief principles and doctrines of divine revelation, to digest them into system, and thus to present them in a connected view? What is a sermon—or at least what ought it to be—but the statement, illustration and enforcement of some revealed truth? And why may not this as lawfully be done in a Catechism or a Confession of Faith, as in a sermon, or indeed in any other form of discourse or communication? "To the law and to the testimony"—Is not the practice for which I here plead—that of making summaries of religious truth; countenanced by what we find in the Bible itself? What is the decalogue, or moral law, but a summary of religious truth and duty? And did not our Lord himself reduce this summary, even to much narrower limits than are given to it in the Old Testament? What is the Lord's prayer, but a summary of devotion? What did the apostle Paul mean when he expressly commanded Timothy—"Hold fast *the form of sound words* which thou hast heard of me?" And when it is considered how short a time the apostle remained in some of the places in which he established churches, we can, I apprehend, scarcely conceive that, at first, he had time to do more than to give his converts, as missionaries now do, a summary of Christian truth and doctrine. That he could not do less than this, is manifest from the nature of the case. Christian churches could not be established and organized without it. This practice, then, appears, I think, to be warranted by apostolick example and divine authority.

Will it be said, that the summaries to which we have referred were made under the same infallible guidance of inspiration, by which the scriptures themselves were indited? Such certainly was the fact; and by referring to the summaries of inspiration, we only claim to have established the point, that such compilations are, in themselves, lawful and useful.

We will now examine, a little more closely, the system of those who admit—not however, it would seem, without some reluctance—that summaries of faith and duty may be framed, provided that in making them, nothing but the very language of scripture be employed. In accordance with this system, summaries of religious truth have been formed, by simply bringing together, from various parts of the sacred volume, a large number of what have been considered apposite texts. Now, although this plan seems to me to require such a regard to *mere language*, as is not required either by reason or revelation, yet I would not offer a single objection against it, were it not for the fact already mentioned—a fact too notorious to be denied or disguised—that the constructions given to the language of scripture are so various and opposite, that all the sects of Christendom take shelter under it; so that it can never be known what a man's *real* sentiments are, merely by his quotations of scripture. Are we to believe that the advocates of this system seek to *conceal* their sentiments—a part of them at least? Do they hold something which they would rather not openly and fully avow, in the face of the world? It really seems no violation of candour or charity, to believe that something of this kind has an influence, on some of those who so vehemently denounce and vituperate all human formularies of faith and doctrine. Others, however, we doubt not there are, who conscientiously think that creeds and confessions, expressed in other words than those of scripture, unduly cramp the human mind; and that by confining ourselves to the very language of inspiration we should provide against this evil

*Dr. Miller.

But we rather think that the evil which these good men would guard against is imaginary; and that their system, if adopted, would throw us upon one that is undeniably great—the evil of sheltering every kind of heresy under a professed regard to the language of inspiration.—Not, by any means, that we consider the language of scripture, in regard to the fundamentals of religion, as in itself loose and equivocal. On the contrary, we believe and maintain that no language can be more plain, significant, and impressive. But what with pretended improvements in translating the original, and the glosses and explanations put upon the translation after it is made, we know that this language has been, and constantly is, most grossly perverted. *We want to tell how we understand it;* and we give the passages of scripture along with our creed, for this very purpose. Does not this embrace the whole that is desirable—a scriptural creed and the interpretation that we give to scripture? Who can deny that this is frank, and fair, and harmless? Nay, is it not perfectly reasonable and highly useful?

As to cramping the human mind, we have to remark, that we do not believe that *great* discoveries are yet to be made in the meaning of the word of God. That prophecy may hereafter be better understood than it is at present, and that particular passages of scripture may be illustrated by learned criticisms, by historical investigations, by geographical, geological, and such like researches and discoveries, we readily admit. But we have no belief that any one leading *doctrine* of Christianity, any one point that we now hold as an important practical truth of the revealed system, will ever be *changed*, by any discoveries yet to be made in the meaning of the sacred writings. We conceive it to be in the highest degree improbable, that any such doctrines and truths as these should have been hidden from the people of God, from the time of the apostles till the present, and that they will continue to be hidden, till the time when these supposed discoveries are to be made. It seems to us, on the contrary, that any pretension that a new and important doctrine had been discovered in the Bible, would be proved false, by its very claim to be *both new and important.* What is important in the doctrines of scripture, has *always* been important to the church of Christ; and we cannot think it reasonable to believe that the whole church has been deprived of truth, important to her edification, for nearly two thousand years; because it was revealed in such a covert manner, that the veil of mystery could not be drawn aside in all that period. Now, our confession and catechisms profess to specify only the *leading* truths and doctrines of the revelation: they do not extend to small and less important circumstances and particulars. They therefore relate only to that which we believe to be *unchangeable.*—They restrict the human mind no more than it is restricted by divine authority. They thus endeavor to provide for the maintenance of an orthodox scriptural creed; and yet they leave a full and complete opening for all real improvements in biblical learning and theological knowledge.

The utility of religious summaries, my young friends, is not inconsiderable. Those especially in the catechetical or questionary form, which renders them most easy and interesting, are incalculably useful to children and youth; and indeed to Christians of all ages and descriptions. For myself, I have no reluctance to state thus publicly, what I have frequently mentioned in private, that in the composition of sermons, one of the readiest and best aids I have ever found, has been my catechism. Let me add

further, that long observation has satisfied me, that a principal reason why instruction and exhortation from the pulpit are so little efficacious, is, that they pre-suppose a degree of information, or an acquaintance with the truths and doctrines of divine revelation, which, by a great part of the hearers, is not possessed; and which would best of all have been supplied by catechetical instruction. It is exactly this kind of instruction, which is, at the present time, most urgently needed, in many, perhaps in the most of our congregations. It is needed to imbue effectually the minds of our people with "the first principles of the oracles of God;" to indoctrinate them soundly and systematically in revealed truth; and thus to guard them against being "carried about with every wind of doctrine;" as well as to prepare them to join in the weekly service of the sanctuary with full understanding, and with minds in all respects formed for the right and deep impression of sacred truth.

Catechisms and creeds of human composition, have, in fact, always existed in the church of God. The Jews have them till this day. What is usually called the apostles' creed, though probably not composed by the apostles themselves, was apparently formed in the apostolic age. That creeds of human composition may be abused, and have been abused, we do not deny. But so has the inspired volume itself, and that in the most palpable and lamentable manner. To argue against the usefulness of any thing, because it *may* be abused, is weak and inconclusive. The argument proves too much.—It goes to destroy every thing excellent. In the primitive Christian church, there was an order of men called catechists, whose business it was to instruct in the first principles of religion, and a description of persons called catechumens, who received this instruction, and by it were prepared for baptism and full communion with the church. We have no such order of men at present in our church, but the duties which they performed ought to be discharged faithfully by parents and pastors; for without this kind of instruction, the best preparation will seldom, if ever, be made, for advahcing rapidly and correctly in Christian knowledge and Christian edification.

Once more—Creeds and catechisms are of use to make known to the world at large, what are the *real* religious tenets of the several Christian denominations that adopt them. It is frequently made the subject of complaint, by different sects of Christians, that their religious faith and principles are misrepresented. This is certainly a just complaint, by every sect that has given to the world a full and fair exhibition of its faith and practice, by which it is known to be governed. But surely those who have not done this, have little reason to complain. At least, they ought not to complain of any misconceptions, or misrepresentations, which do not appear to have been wilful and malignant. It does seem to me that every religious denomination owes to itself, and to the world at large, a fair exhibition of the fundamentals of its faith. To itself it owes such an exhibition, that unfounded prejudices may not be conceived to its disadvantage—and for the same reason, as well as that those who do not belong to it, may be gratified and edified, the debt is due to the world at large. The justice of this opinion has, in fact, been almost universally felt, if not distinctly admitted. There are very few sects in Christendom, that have not public and acknowledged formularies of their faith: and those who have not, almost always refer, when inquiries about their principles are made, to some writings, or to some author, generally acknowledged as having made a just repre-

sentation of their religious belief and practice.

You have now heard my reply to all the objections, of any moment, which I have ever heard, against religious creeds and catechisms, and my reasons for thinking that these formularies and summaries are not only lawful, but exceedingly useful and important. If what I have said on this subject has been satisfactory —and I hope it has been so—you will be prepared to hear the intended course of lectures without prejudice, and consequently with a greater prospect of advantage.

The catechism on which the subsequent lectures are to be founded, is the production of some of the most learned and pious divines that ever lived. Its origin was this—In the year A. D 1643, an assembly of one hundred and twenty-one divines, with thirty lay assessors, was convened, by an order of the British parliament, in Westminster. They were soon joined by commissioners from Scotland. They sat more than five years and a half. They hoped to have formed a rule of faith, and form of church government, for both nations. What they did was ultimately rejected by the English, and adopted by the Scotch. The Presbyterian church in this country, derives its origin from that of Scotland, and has taken its Confession of Faith, with some important alterations relative to magistrates and civil government, and its catechisms, with only one slight alteration,* from the Scottish model. The present standards of our church were adopted by the Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, sitting in this city, in May 1788.

You will understand, my young friends, that I am no advocate for national churches, or ecclesiastical establishments of any kind; nor is any thing of this sort, in the slightest degree, countenanced, but on the contrary, it is expressly disclaimed in our church standards, and cordially disapproved, I know, by the clergy, as well as by the laity of our church. In this we certainly differ from the Westminster assembly of divines. What we esteem their error, in regard to national religious establishments, was, however, rather the error of the day in which they lived, than any thing peculiar to the men who composed that assembly. There is not one word touching this point, and there never was, in the shorter catechism which they formed. This is a composition, which has been held, by as competent judges probably as the world has seen since the apostolick age, to be among the soundest and best expressed compendiums of Christian faith and practice, that were ever formed by uninspired men. Such, then, is the chatechism, and such the short history of it, to which your serious attention is to be drawn, in the subsequent lectures.

In the conclusion of this introductory address, allow me to say, that I indulge the hope, that your attendance here will be regular, punctual, and serious. Occasional absences it may not be practicable to avoid. But may it not be expected that slight hindrances and fashionable amusements will not be permitted to draw you aside from a course of religious instruction, which will occupy but one evening in the week, and which it will be highly advantageous to receive in a connected series.

One thing more, and I shall have done. Let me beseech you all, not

* The single alteration, or omission rather, was in the larger catechism; where, in stating what is forbidden in the second commandment, the original framers of the catechism, among many things which they specify, mention this—"tolerating a false religion." This clause, the writer, who was a member of the Synod that adopted our standards, remembers was rejected very promptly—he thinks without debate, and by a unanimous vote.

to content yourselves merely with *intellectual* improvement, important and commendable as such improvement certainly is. I have known some young persons, who were desirous to increase their *knowledge*, and to render it accurate, on the subject of religion: and who, notwithstanding, guarded themselves very cautiously, against the influence of this knowledge on their *hearts and lives*. They wished to understand religion, but not to practise it. Take, I entreat you, a different course. Endeavour to open your hearts, as well as your understandings, to the sacred truths which you are to hear explained and inculcated. Do I ask too much, when I request you always to pray for a divine blessing on what you are going to hear, and after you shall have heard it? If you will do this, the happiest result may certainly be expected. And if, in answer to your prayers, and the prayers of many which will, I know, be offered for you, your attention to these lectures shall be the means of leading you to genuine Christian piety, we shall have reason to rejoice—and I hope shall actually rejoice together—through every subsequent period of our existence—I, that I was permitted to be the instrument of so much good; and you, that God was pleased to bless my feeble endeavours, to your eternal benefit. For this let us now pray together.

(To be continued.)

BIOGRAPHY.

From the Edinburgh Missionary Magazine

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SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LATE REV. MR. JOSEPH MILNER.

In a former number of the Evangelical Magazine, a memoir of the life of this excellent man was inserted. In the following supplemental account, therefore, little novelty can be expected. It will, however, lead the reader to a more familiar view of Milner's youthful days, the strict economy he was constrained to observe, and the manner in which he not only surmounted his difficulties, but laid a foundation for his own and his brother's future preferment; and it will shew to those who excuse their indolence by vain complaints of the hurry of business, or the fatigue of manual labour, how much may be accomplished by industry, and at any rate how superior is the *prospect* of the youth who devotes his little leisure to the improvement of his mind, to that of him who spends it in intemperate mirth.

Mr. Milner was born in the West Riding of Yorkshire, near Leeds. His father was a weaver, and died, leaving two sons, Joseph and Isaac, the eldest being yet a boy. Receiving no paternal inheritance, Joseph, together with his yonger brother, plied their spinning-wheels so diligently, as decently to maintain themselves and an infirm mother. During summer, they generally commenced labour at break of day, and in winter rose to work by candle-light. It was observed of these brothers by the neighbourhood, that on a holiday they would even neglect the usual sports of the youth, and apply themselves sedulously to the perusal of such books as fell within their reach. Their industry, frugality, sobriety, and love of reading, indicated to the morp

discerning their future rise and figure in the world. To the lasting honour of the inhabitants of Leeds, a private subscription was entered into, with a view to send the eldest brother to school and to college. Joseph accordingly was placed by his benevolent and disinterested patrons at the grammar-school of Leeds. Here he attended three years, and was then entered at Cambridge. During these three years he had every night communicated to his brother the lesson of the day, which had not only initiated Isaac in the Latin and Greek, but had doubtless greatly contributed to his own improvement, by fixing more powerfully in his memory the knowledge he was daily aquiring. Joseph's application and natural abilities distinguished him at the university. He ranked as *senior optime*, and gained the second classical medal. He was soon after ordained in the Church of England, and became curate of a charge in Hull. He was also appointed master of the free grammer school there. Isaac now offered himself as a candidate to be his brother's assistant in teaching. A learned man was sent to observe his qualifications, and found him at his loom with a Tacitus by his side. He was declared fully qualified, and henceforth abandoned his manual occupation. The views of Joseph relative to some of the most eminent and fundamental doctrines of the gospel had hitherto been at least very obscure, if not the fashionable ones of this lowering day of frivolity and unbelief. The time of Isaac's removal from Leeds became a still more interesting epoch in Joseph's life; for about this period he began to change his opinions and manner of life; and now having himself experienced the new birth, he dauntlessly preached that mystery to his people, and pressed their attention to the momentous doctrines of original sin, the atonement of the Son of God, and justification by faith. And it may here be observed, that he ascribed much, under God, to the perusal of Luther's commentary on the epistle to the Galatians, the same book that was honoured of God long ago to dissipate the legal views which at one time fettered the mind of the famous Gib, who afterwards became one of the most eminent ministers in the Secession Church of Scotland. While Mr. Milner's new sermons became "the power of God" to the salvation of some, by others they were branded as the dogmas of Methodism, if not the ravings of fatuity. It has generally been reckoned fair to try a preacher's sincerity, and the truth of his doctrine, by his own practice in life. Infidels, alas! often find it too easy to shelter themselves under the false refuge of inconsistency of profession and practice. But no ground for such false refuge could be found in Joseph Milner. He maintained a most devout and ornamental Christian walk, during the remainder of his life, more than thirty years. So that the most rancorous decriers of his preaching and piety reluctantly admit, "That certain it is his life was answerable to his professions, and he has the most indisputable right to the praise of an honest man."* A bible was his constant pocket companion. Often did he recommend that precious treasure to his young scholars, urging them to occupy their minds much upon its truths, as the only means of counteracting the deceit of their own hearts, and the wiles of the wicked one; as fitted infallibly to direct them in their duty to God, and; (far from "silencing the suggestions of nature," as some will insist;† or extinguishing the social and cheerful disposition of man,) as rendering him still more amiable

* Public Characters,—1799, 1800,—Article, *Dean Isaac Milner.*

† Public Characters, *ibid.*

in these respects, as imparting additional relish to all the enjoyments of life, and placing his cheerfulness on a foundation that will gain strength from affliction, and will support him in the hour of dissolution. May many of his scholars yet profit by his wholsome advices!

Isaac having entered to Queen's College, Cambridge, greatly distinguished himself as a classical scholar, and erudite mathematician. He adopted from conviction, his brother's views of the leading doctrines of Chrtstianity; and, it is believed, was instrumental in convincing, or in fortifying and establishing the convictions of Mr. Wilberforce, well known for his salutary warning against the inadequate conceptions of Christianity, prevailing especially among professors of his own rank. Mr. Isaac Milner accompanied Mr. Pitt and Mr. Wilberforce to the continent for a short time in the year 1788, and on his return was elected President of Queen's College, of which he had formerly been an eleve; which honourable station he filled for sometime.

Joseph, notwithstanding his zeal and fidelity in preaching "Christ, and him crucified," also experienced some smaller preferments. He continued to be a diligent student, and in the intervals of recess which a laborious charge admitted, prepared to give battle to the English champion of infidelity, Gibbon. He also began a History of the Church of Christ; three volumes of which were published before his death. From these volumes, it will appear, in what estimation Mr. Milner held the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. To give any analysis, however, of his works, is not here intended. All of them will well reward the trouble of the pious reader. In the sovereignty of God, he was cut off in the midst of his years and usefulness, on the 15th of November, 1797.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

From the Scotch Preacher.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

It was the happiness of Scotland; very early, perhaps as early as the apostolic age, to receive the light of the glorious gospel: and although, as was the case with the rest of the Christian world, this light came to be greatly obscured, by the ambitious encroachments of the Church of Rome; yet it is evident, that in Scotland it was never entirely extinguished. For, in some of the remote parts of the country,—in some of those very islands, which we are now apt to consider as the seats of ignorance and barbarity, lived a people, remarkable for simplicity of manners, purity of behaviour, and unaffected piety towards God. These never submitted to the usurpations of the Papal tyranny; and these were *the little leaven, which afterwards leavened the whole lump.* Of their number, a *Columbus*, and a *Kentigern*, were famous in the fifth century,—and a *Clemens* and *Sampson* in the seventh.

And even in the tenth age, when the darkness of corruption and error had greatly increased, we are told, there were some godly men in Scotland, who taught the true doctrine of Christ's atonement, and continued to exercise their functions apart

by themselves, without acknowledging the authority of those who assumed a spiritual power over God's heritage. But it was not till about 400 years after this, that any thing of a general reformation began to appear. Then *indeed waters broke forth in our wilderness, and streams in our desert.* Nor was all the cruelty of bigotted zeal able to destroy this Heavenly plant; but, watered by the blood of a *Resby*, a *Hamilton*, and a *Wishart*, it grew stronger and stronger, till thousands flocked to its refreshing shade, and took shelter under its branches.

To support and animate these, and to carry on the glorious work so happily begun, God, in his Providence, raised up a man of apostolic piety and resolution, whose zeal awakened the attention, and whose prudence conducted the zeal of his countrymen, in shaking off the Romish yoke. This was the famous *John Knox*, that great instrument of the Scotch reformation, whose name will be precious to latest ages.

The civil dissentions which then prevailed in the country, did not a little befriend the reformation. And the bold attempt of the Popish clergy to get the whole power into their own hands, on the death of James V. opened the eyes of many, who, till then, had remained insensible; while the hope of enriching themselves with the revenues of the church, made others ready to join in abolishing Popery. And thus, from different principles, a barrier was formed in defence of the reformation, which all the fraud and cruelty of the Queen Regent, or the address and destructive charms of her unfortunate daughter, were never able to overturn. Nay, those very measures which they took for crushing the Protestant interest, by the tender mercies of our God, proved the means of establishing it, and hastened the overthrow of the Papal power in Scotland. So that, in 1560, the essential doctrines of genuine Christianity were publicly acknowledged by the States of the Kingdom, and the corruptions of the Church of Rome condemned. This sum of doctrine, or Confession of Faith, was drawn up by the promoters of the Reformation, at the command of the Parliament; in whose presence it was read; and, after due consideration, was ratified by them the 17th of July, 1560. And on the 24th of August, two acts were passed; one against the Mass, and the other abolishing the Pope's usurped authority in Scotland.

Hitherto the struggle principally had been about the doctrines of religion, as of the first and greatest importance; but these being now in some measure secured, our reformers turned their attention to the government of the Church, which, under the Papacy, had become a system of worldly power and interest, and, instead of promoting religion, tended to excite and strengthen some of the worst passions in the human mind.

A plan for the worship and government of the church was accordingly drawn up; not merely in conformity to the church of Geneva, as one of our modern historians has asserted; but such a plan as to our pious ancestors, appeared most agreeable to the mind of God in scripture, and the practice of the primitive church.

It is true, this plan was widely different from that of the church of Rome. In it there was nothing to gratify ambition, or avarice; but an amiable, a grand simplicity runs through the whole; such as suited the worship of the humble Jesus, and the nature of that kingdom which is not of this world.

But although our Reformers thus freely gave up with all in the Romish church, which could please a sensual mind, it was no part of their opinion, that the worship of God should be mean and groveling,—or that the ministers of religion should be rendered incapable of discharging the duties of their functions by poverty, or depend upon the changeable humours of the people for their subsistence. Though they gave up with all views of living in affluence upon the revenues of the church, and did not look upon these as the property of the clergy; yet did they esteem them a fund sacred to religious purposes, to be employed in supporting the clergy with decency, maintaining the poor, and educating the youth of the nation. These are the words of the first book of discipline: "Of necessity we judge, that every several Kirk have one schoolmaster appointed, such a one at least as is able to instruct the youth in the principles of religion, and teach grammar, and the Latin tongue, where the place is of any reputation; and that, besides, in every notable town, there be a college, in which at least the arts of logic and rhetoric, together with the tongues, be read by sufficient masters, for whom honest stipends must be appointed. And lastly, care should be taken of the support of the great schools, or universities."

Thus, it appears, that Knox, and the other leading instruments of the Reformation, were very far from encouraging that dilapidation of church revenues which afterwards took place. Nor were they the persons, whatever has been alledged, who were for demolishing the very fabrics of the churches, and all that was decent and cleanly in the places of public worship. No: The first was often done, in direct opposition to their warmest remonstrances, by the lower class of people, who had long groaned under the oppressive tyranny of the Monks and Popish clergy; while those of higher rank, who had the revenues of the church in their hand, could scarce be prevailed upon to employ them in a way which would prevent the other.

But although this form of worship and government was embraced by the friends of the Reformation in Scotland, and practised by them, so far as their situation would allow; yet it was not till the year 1592, that it received the sanction of civil authority, and became the national order. And even when the Presbyterian church seemed thus established, her tranquility was but of short duration; for there remained in the country a strong party, who, either retaining a secret regard to Popery, or thinking it prudent to recede as little as possible from the old practice, were for adopting that form of church government which had been established in England. The people of this persuasion continued with great keenness to oppose Presbytery: and though they could not, for sometime, procure an absolute repeal of the laws in its favor; yet, by repeated innovations, they gradually destroyed their effect, till at last they got a kind of mixed Episcopacy substituted in its place; which continued to be the form of the church of Scotland till the breaking out of the civil wars.

The true Presbyterians, still very numerous in Scotland, having now appeared with their usual zeal in support of civil liberty, were well entitled to the countenance of the Parliament; whereas, the friends of the hierarchy, both in Scotland and England, had rendered themselves and their opinions obnoxious, by supporting the crown in those arbitrary and unconstitutional measures which first inflamed the nation. This occasioned the calling together that assembly of Divines, which, about the year 1648, met at Westminster: An assembly which, whether we consider the number, learning, or piety, of the persons who composed it, may well be compared with the ancient councils. This venerable body, after a long and candid examination, agreed to the

scheme of doctrines, and the form of worship and government, contained in the Confession of Faith and Directory, which is, in substance, the same with what had been established in the beginning of the Reformation. This Confession and Directory was soon after received by the Church of Scotland; which had now recovered something of its former power; and continued, if not to flourish, at least to exist, till the Restoration; when the King, forgetting all the promises made during his afflictions, and the services done him by the Scotch Presbyterians, abolished their government, and permitted a most cruel persecution to be carried on against them, because they would not abjure all their known principles, conform to the Episcopal government, and acknowledge him head of the church. This persecution in Scotland continued during the whole reign of Charles II. and King James, his brother, whose open attachment to Popery, and pursuit of arbitrary measures, at last awakened the zeal of the nation, and produced that ever-memorable revolution in 1688, which may well be called the *Æra of British liberty*. The happy consequences of this change, the Presbyterians in Scotland immediately felt, not only in respect of civil property, but also in the full establishment of that worship and government in the church, to which they had discovered a most steady attachment during a cruel persecution of eight and twenty years. The sufferings endured by the Presbyterians in Scotland, during the reign of the two brothers, were so various and shocking, that, were they not proved by the records of the Parliament and Privy Council, they would scarce now be credited. The facts cannot be controverted; and the ground of these sufferings was no rebellion against the civil government, but pure principle of conscience, in men who were desirous of living peaceably, only asking the liberty of worshiping their God in the way their own minds could approve.

REVIEWS.

From the Christian Spectator.

Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits; addressed to a Student in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. By Samuel Miller, D.D. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the said Seminary. New York: G. & C. Carvil. pp. 476.

The table of contents to this book presents us with such an assemblage of particulars, that to review it in detail would be to write another volume. Under the two words, "*manners*" and "*habits*," the author discourses not only of the characteristics of the clown and the gentleman, but of the *To pan* of the clerical profession,—from its humblest parochial duties up to the highest seat of presbyterian dignity—should his pupil one day be elevated to it—the moderator's chair of the General Assembly. Amidst this variety, therefore, we shall pass along lightly, in the track of the author, pausing only here and there with a passing reflection.

In his introductory letter, Dr. M. exhibits the importance of his subject, and combats the prejudices which exist in many minds against any attempt to discuss it. We have none of the particular prejudices which he remarks upon. We apprehend, however, as indeed our author does, that no person will become truly polite from books merely. Every well bred man has acquired his manners, as he has his pronunciation, from converse with society, and not from written rules. We once witnessed the endeavours of a doctor in divinity to discipline a class of students in Walker's pronunciation. The least ingenious, and least observing, were in this department the most docile of his pupils. Under the idea of acquiring a popular accomplishment, these gave themselves assiduously to the subject; and truly, if any thing could have cured Walker himself of his own notions of orthoepy, it must have been the attempts of these pupils. Very similar, we imagine, would be the success which would attend a formal attempt to teach politeness from a text book. It is not a science to be understood by propositions. He who has not acquired something of it from early discipline and from observation in the world, will hardly learn it theoretically in his study. Though he con over all the treatises he can collect together—if he carry the sloven into his chamber, whatever else he may come out of it—whether a precisian, or a fop, or an automaton,—it is altogether probable he will not come forth the gentleman. Let, for example, one of those unpolished and unpolishable graduates in divinity, who sometimes come abroad, the unjust reproach of our theological seminaries, to reform the world, who themselves are not to be reformed, learn from Dr. M's book, that the appropriate manners of a clergyman consist in these particulars; namely, "*dignity, gentleness, condescension, affability, reserve*, and *uniformity*." You have given him the theory, but you have by no means conformed him to the practice. You have perhaps not even given him any tolerable idea of these qualities. For aiming at dignity, he becomes perchance formal,—at gentleness he becomes tame or feminine,—at affability, he exercises himself in bows and smiles,—and worst of all, aiming at condescension, he puts on that graciousness of manner which is more provoking than arrogance itself. Some people are never so repulsive as when they *condescend*—whose look and manner say, see how obligingly I can stoop to your condition. And herein perhaps is the chief objection which some feel to works of this class—that while they are not intended for the well-bred, the uncouth and clownly will make but a perverted use of them. Still, we are not of those who discard treatises on manners altogether. We believe they may be,—we think the one before us will be,—of considerable utility to the world. A number of specific precepts may be given, and a number of specific errors pointed out, respecting the proprieties of life, in regard to which the reader may examine himself, and finding himself at fault touching these, he will be put upon the observation of his own manners, and of his fellow-men's about him, and will thus find himself in the right way to improvement. This, books may do, and this is "the humble office" Dr. M. "assigns to this little volume."

The value of an attractive manner is, in some degree, universally acknowledged. Even the vulgar, while they admire a genteel mansion, do at the same time secretly regard with a more invidious admiration, the refined manners of its inhabitants. And all men, as universally as they possess a sensibility to the admiration or the satire of their fellow men, though with extremely di-

verse notions of propriety, do endeavour in their own way, to recommend themselves by means of their address.

To a minister of the gospel, good breeding is peculiarly important. When he, the business of whose life brings him into the society of all men, that he may win all to Christ, disgusts the refined by his coarseness, or repels the simple by his preciseness, or scandalizes the serious by his levity, or offends all by his disregard of the proprieties of life, he is eminently unhappy. The minister of Jesus is the messenger of Heaven, sent to exert a Heavenly influence on his fellowmen; and the more he corresponds in manner to the spirit of the gospel, or to the example of its first preachers, adding to the affectionateness of John the ingenuousness of Peter, and the manliness of Paul, the more will he make his Heavenly influence felt; while by a manner the reverse of this he not only looses his own personal influence, but he offends his sacred office; through him "the ministry is blamed."

By "good manners" Dr. M. means "those manners which Christian purity and benevolence recommend, and which, where those graces reign, they will ever be found substantially to produce;" and he adopts the sentiment of Witherspoon, "that true religion is not only consistent with, but necessary to the perfection of true politeness." Piety is favourable to politeness on every account, even taking the world's standard of good breeding. It promotes *simplicity*, which is opposed to pedantry and affectation of every kind; it enjoins *sincerity*, the true quality of which those often hollow pretensions which the world calls "civilities" are but the counterfeit; it inculcates *modesty*, teaching us to esteem others better than ourselves, and is thus opposed to an arrogant or disrespectful manner towards others; it destroys *pride*, which either makes us disagreeable for our self-complacency, on the one hand, or else, on the other, causing us to be too solicitous for the respect of men, puts us ill at ease in their society;—pride, in its various modifications of superciliousness, vanity, and false diffidence, is the source of more offences against good manners than any other feeling of the human heart;—it promotes *cheerfulness* and *affability*, in the same degree that it promotes peace of mind and good will; and to sum up all, it inspires that true *benevolence* which is the essence of politeness,—which, in the words of a definition of Dr. Witherspoon, is 'real kindness kindly expressed,' in all our intercourse in human society.

The acquaintance of our readers may furnish them with exemplifications of these remarks. They recall with pleasure to our own minds one, particularly—who is now a missionary among a distant and more than pagan people,—in whom there was an elevated cheerfulness and simplicity of manner, which made his society alike agreeable to the cultivated and unembarrassing to the home-bred, and the goodness of whose heart shone out in every expression of his countenance, and was exhibited in a thousand kind and respectful actions unconsciously performed. He was a beautiful illustration of the truth of Dr. M's position, and yet no one would have been more surprised to hear himself called polite: for his early circumstances had not introduced him into the halls of fashionable life, nor acquainted him with the etiquette of the glittering portion of mankind. He was however conversant with the "excellent of the earth," and as far as he had opportunity, was an observer of the world. Dr. M. quotes the remark of a venerable clergyman, showing the connexion between piety and politeness, that "some of the more polished and pious of the ministers belonging to the *Moravians*, furnished specimens of manners as worthy of imitation as any he had ever seen. It is an opinion we should be prepared to entertain from the character of their piety.

Piety alone, however, is not sufficient for the complete attainment of good breeding. It cannot altogether reform the abuses, or supply the neglects, of early education; it cannot correct habits of which the possessor may be unconscious, or which he may think indifferent; and there are many things which are merely conventional and can be understood only by a knowledge of the world. True politeness is indeed substantially the same in all countries; yet it is variously modified by artificial forms: the manners of the Persian are not the manners of the Englishman, nor the civilities of the Hollander precisely those of the Frenchman; and hence so far as good breeding, in any country, depends on an acquaintance with these conventionary forms, it must be acquired by intercourse with society.

Dr. M. commences his second Letter with the question whether there is "any thing *peculiar* in the style of manners proper for a minister of the gospel? Ought the manners of a clergyman perceptibly to *differ* from those of a well-bred man of a secular profession?" He decides that they ought; and we think correctly. The manners of a clergyman *ought* to be peculiar—in those respects in which his profession is itself calculated to make them so. Thus a just sense of the nature and responsibilities of his office will naturally give him a more serious cast of character than that of other men; and in proportion as he is more conversant with Heavenly things, so will he naturally exhibit more pureness and elevation of mind in his conversation, and more simplicity and kindness in his general deportment. In these respects he *may* be peculiar, and indeed very peculiar, without affectation, or the imputation of singularity. Such is the *natural* influence of his calling. But this is a different kind of peculiarity from that, we know not what to call it, *sanctified demeanour* which some imagine to be the proper style of the clerical profession. We allude to a certain manner which is put on, like a saintly cowl, for reverence's sake—which wears an air of affected meekness, and walks softly, and never speaks but in solemn accents, even on common topics,—which not merely deepens its gravity at any unbeseeming levity in its presence, but represses even the frank and cheerful sympathies of our nature, and turns a pastoral, and even a social visit, into stiffness and constraint. This style of manners, like the "holy tone," is less common in our times and country than it has been in others. It has passed away with the false taste, —in the laity as well as clergy,— of which it was the offspring, together with all the strifes and emulous dissimularities of sects in other times; and has given place to a more free and manly, and at the same time, not less serious and salutary cast of character, in the clergy. We apprehend, however, that there are still those, whose influence is impaired by a too clerical style of manners,—though, it must be confessed, the greater number, probably, err on the opposite hand.

All affectation is offensive. Nothing is beautiful but truth, was a maxim of Guido, and it is as true in manners as in the arts. Nay, how much more important its application to the living man, and above all, to the clergyman, acting upon his fellow men, and moulding their sentiments and manners, than to the inanimate productions of the pencil and the chisel. But there is no species of affectation which is

more offensive than sanctimony. There is none which has so generally disgusted mankind, and filled their minds with prejudice against the sacred profession. That seriousness of character in the clergyman which is the natural effect of his employments, the world will respect; but a seriousness beyond this, an assumed sanctity, however well-meant, or unconsciously adopted, they will attribute to hypocrisy or weakness. It is indeed true on the other hand, (if we seem to speak against gravity in the ministry,) that he whose seriousness of character *falls short* of his profession, does likewise give disgust to the world. For "nothing is so odious," says Bishop Burnet, "as a man that disagrees with his character; a soldier that is a coward, a courtier that is brutal, an ambassador that is abject, are not such unseemly things as a bad or vicious, a drunken or dissolute," and he might have added, with a proportionate degree of truth, a light-minded and trifling "clergyman;" and though levity be a fault which the world will more easily forgive than its opposite extreme, they will at the same time reproach it with the greater inconsistency.

Against this *hyper-clerical* style of manners, Dr. M. takes care to guard his pupils. "My object," he remarks, "is by no means to help you to weave a "professional cloak," for the purpose of covering mental imbecility, corrupt practice, or sinister design. It is not to recommend a buckram dress, for the purpose of repelling familiarity, or inspiring with awe. But simply to help you to *appear*, what you ought to *be*,—a pious, benevolent, amiable man." Yet, after all, among the members of a seminary there will always be a number who will sooner apprehend the doctrine of a certain style of manners *appropriately clerical*, than conceive a just idea of what that style should be, however explained or qualified. Habitually passive to instruction on every subject, they will rely the more implicitly on precepts for instruction in manners; and understanding that as clergymen, their manners are to be peculiar:—that they are to be 'dignified, gentle, condescending, affable, reserved, and uniform,' it will not be surprising if, as they have *put on the reverend*, they have put off humanity. Perhaps therefore it were better, in instructions of this kind, to know nothing of clerical manners as such, but simply to point out those things which are hurtful to the ministry, and leave the rest to piety, their sacred office, and their own observation.

The third Letter in the volume treats of "offensive personal habits." It is indeed a budget of offensive things—such as we could hope no student at Princeton, or at any other theological seminary, would need to be admonished of. Our first feeling on reading it was, that its subjects, such was their barbarism, were too gravely treated, and too much at length; that they had better been thrown off in a satirical paragraph, or omitted altogether; or else been printed in a separate manual, for the general benefit of slovens, instead of being made conspicuous in a professed treatise on the manners of *clergymen*, as if they particularly needed the admonitions contained in this letter. But slovens there will be, and some will blunder into the sacred profession, as into every other; and when we reflect how much positive mischief these may do, and how much good they may fail to do, through the mere effect of ill breeding, we are willing they should be lectured into some sense of their improprieties, and if possible, made to feel their grossness in the graphic language of Dr. M. It is a lesson they will be more likely to meet with in a professedly clerical book, than in any secular treatise on manners.

If then there be any one, whether student or pastor, who is chargeable with the things here reprobated,—of "bespattering the clothes and persons" of his neighbours with "tobacco spittle," and "defiling floors and carpets beyond endurance," with "puddles at his feet;" of "combing his hair," or "paring his nails," in company, or of "boisterous laughter;" or of all imaginable "awkward, constrained, or lounging postures," as if he had taken lessons in sitting from children's handkerchiefs, in which the human form is sometimes made to represent the nine digits, or all the shapes of the alphabet; or if he be guilty of "picking his teeth at table," or of "coughing, yawning, and sneezing over the dishes," or be chargeable with the daintiness of the epicure, or the greediness of the gormand, or the incipient thirst of the tippler, or with many other things which are pointed out in this chapter, and some of which we cannot possibly mention, he will find here a mirror in which he will surely view himself with no great complacency.

Slovenly habits in some men are the misfortune of their education; in others they are the effect of sheer heedlessness. Some indulge them from a low pride: good manners are sour grapes,—they are conscious of not possessing them, and they therefore affect to despise them; others, from disgust at the opposite extreme of refinement: they prefer coarseness to starchness, and bluntness to effeminacy. But in all cases in which vulgar manners are suffered to go uncorrected, the subject of them surely does not estimate their effect on his usefulness. A minister of Jesus should be an "ensample to his flock," *in all things* which are comely. He should be welcome to their dwellings, and not dreaded as a nuisance. But we have known ministers—men perhaps of excellent traits of character, and able preachers—whose visits among their people were rather endured than made profitable, because of the various petty annoyances they gave. Perhaps for instance, they have no sooner entered a house than the destruction of furniture goes on, till the visit is ended; and, not improbably, they go away musing at the strange demeanour of the lady,—at her uneasiness and fidgeting, and her occasional inattentiveness to their remarks—never reflecting that not every lady is stoic enough to see with composure, her chairs rasped with boot soles, or her carpet soiled with tobacco juice, or the beauty of an entire room defaced, even to the necessity of sending for the paper-hanger, by heads too heedless to consider that paper-hangings were not made to be reclined against. Now it were a charity to such men to show them the evil of their slovenly habits. It would be giving them an important piece of information, to show them what they seem not to know, the the use of such things as paint and varnish, or to demonstrate to them the reasonableness of the doctrine, that if it be worth while to ornament furniture at all, it is equally desirable, that what is done with so much niceness in the work-shop, should not be recklessly undone in the parlour.

These are indeed small matters in themselves considered, and in themselves are unworthy of serious reprehension. But in their connexion with ministerial usefulness they may merit so much remark as we have bestowed upon them. Petty mischiefs are great evils in certain circumstances.

The fourth and fifth Letters relate to "conversation,"—the fifth exclusively to *religious* conversation. Both contain good remarks, and especially the latter, but their topics are quite too numerous for us to notice. We shall merely glance at a few.

Among the cautions the author

gives his pupil, "with especial earnestness," one is that he put himself "on his guard against being drawn into controversy, in company, with *aged men* and *females.*" Ladies have a natural ally in our gallantry, and may ply us with their "acuteness, wit, sprightliness, and delicate raillery," and even with their specious arguments, while our hands are tied by our courtesy, which forbids our making a manful defence; and as to "aged men,"

Never dream that you will be able to convince, or by any means to effect an alteration in the opinions of a man who has passed the age of *three score* or *three score and ten.* You do not dispute with such an one on equal terms. If his opinions be ever so erroneous, he is probably wedded to them by long habit as well as by strong prejudice. He will naturally consider himself as your superior, and take for granted that you cannot instruct him. Of course, you will find it difficult to use the same freedom and scope of argument with him, that you would with one nearer to an equality with yourself in age.—p. 106.

It often happens that the opinions of which the aged are most tenacious, and which they most expect their juniors to regard with deference, are those which they received when they themselves were young; and the reason is, that these opinions, having been formed with the less maturity of judgment, partake the more of prejudice and the less of rational conviction—and nothing is so impatient of contradiction as prejudice. But in the mean time, as light and improvement are progressive, it is not improbable that their younger brethren may have formed their opinions on the same subjects under better advantages and with better results; and feeling that free inquiry is the equal right of all, and not perceiving how age should hallow prejudice, or give to error the character of truth, they will not always be disposed to receive the sentiments of aged men with that deference which is due to age itself. Perhaps they will oftener reply with the spirit of Elihu, the youngest of Job's reprovers, than exhibit his modest diffidence and long delay. "I am young and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you my opinion. I said Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Hearken to me: I also will show my opinion." Great respect is also due to age. And it may often be better for a young man to hear opinions expressed, in which he cannot concur, or to hear his own proscribed, especially if they be of a speculative instead of a practical nature, and keep himself to a respectful silence, rather than engage in a warm discussion with one who is very much his senior. At the same time he may lay up a maxim for his own conduct when he himself shall have become a man of years. It was a resolution of Franklin,—who had observed the captiousness which old men are wont to exhibit towards their juniors, sometimes *because they are their juniors*, —that when *he* should be old, he would treat with respect the opinions of young men.

There are many just remarks on the subject of "religious conversation," which we might be inclined to enlarge upon, could we pretend to notice even a small proportion of the topics which are scattered along the volume. We will select a few passages as we come to the chapter succeeding.

It is the *error* of some to imagine that religious conversation is to be carried on with a tone of voice, and an aspect of countenance, peculiar to itself. Hence, while these persons converse on all other subjects in a simple, easy, natural manner, the moment they pass to the subject of religion, their whole manner is changed. —p. 136.

As if religion were the saddest, and not the most cheerful thing in the world. We have heard persons both talk and preach in such a sort, that an untaught heathen, judging from their tone and countenance might conclude that the Christian religion was a kind of *reluctant alternative*,—better indeed, but hardly better, than the opposite alternative of not embracing it. Why should we always speak of "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report," in the tones which nature gave us for sympathy and mourning?

Shun this fault with the utmost care. Do not, indeed, allow yourself to fall into the opposite extreme.—I mean talking on the subject of religion with levity. But, at the same time, let all grimace, all sanctimoniousness of manner, all affected solemnity, all lofty dictation, be carefully avoided. The more simple, affable, and entirely inartificial your manner, the more you will gratify all classes; nor is this all; the more easily will you always find it to slide insensibly into religious conversation, without alarming the fears of the most thoughtless; and the more easy to recur to it again, after a little interruption from other topics.—pp. 136, 137.

A common and mischievous error is well remarked upon in the following passage:

Be not hasty in publishing the exercises or situation of those whom you know to be anxiously inquiring. It is deeply painful to observe the frequency and injudiciousness with which this rule is infringed. A person, perhaps, has scarcely become conscious to himself of deep solicitude respecting his spiritual interest, and given a hint of it to his minister, or to some pious friend, before it is blazed abroad; becomes matter of public speculation; and leads a number of persons immediately to crowd around him, and offer their services as his instructors and guides. The consequences of this method of proceeding are often extremely unhappy. Some are puffed up, by becoming objects of so much unexpected attention and conversation. Others are revolted, and, perhaps, deeply disgusted, at being addressed by so many on the subject of their exercises, and by some, it may be, very injudiciously. While a third class, whose impressions are slight and transient are mortified at being held up to view as awakened persons, and afterwards lying under the odium of having gone back; and, possibly in some cases, so much mortified, as to withdraw from those individuals and opportunities, which might have been essentially useful. Besides all this, it has often happened, that the number of serious persons who have immediately clustered around an individual thus publicly announced as under religious impressions, has been so great, and their talents, knowledge, experience, and capacity for giving sound instruction so extremely various, that they have perplexed, confounded, and most unhappily retarded, the object of their well-meant attention, instead of really helping him. With almost as much propriety might a physician of the body, when he found a patient ill of a dubious disease, throw open his apartment to every intruder, and invite every medical practitioner within twenty miles of him, however discordant their theories, to come in and prescribe at pleasure for the sufferer.—pp. 155, 156.

We quote the following for the benefit of religious *editors*, as well as for those who write accounts for their papers,—which accounts editors cannot always divest of an objectionable dress, however they may be disposed to do it. The author is speaking of the use of "technical language" in religion.

Thus it is by no means uncommon to hear it stated, that "a great revival has *broken out*" in such a place;—that there is "*a great religious stir*" in this or that congregation;—that such an individual, or such a number of individuals, have been "*struck under conviction*;—that a particular person appears to be "*in the pangs of the new birth*"—that a person whose anxiety on the subject of religion is very great, "*has been roughly handled, but is likely to be brought through*;—that such another, "*has been happily brought through*;" that so many, in a certain place, are "*brought under conviction*," and so many "*have obtained hopes.*" &c.—p. 161.

Some of the phrases used in relation to revivals are beautiful in themselves, but are become objectionable both on account of their great triteness, and their acquired technicality. Thus the expression, "*showers of divine grace*" is a beautiful allusion to a shower of rain falling on a reviving field, but it has in a great measure lost its figurative character, by its perpetual use to designate a revival. But some of these expressions are absolutely intolerable. For instance, several quoted by Dr. M. are, to use his own words, "expressive of the appearance of a *plague* or *pestilence*, [or *conflagration*] rather than of a rich blessing."

"Visiting" is next in order in the volume. The following suggestions may be valuable to some in regard to their pastoral visits:

> Never go to a house, without having, if possible, something interesting to communicate; an appropriate little *tract*, for more than one member of the family; an instructive, pointed *anecdote* to repeat from one of the periodicals of the preceding week; some popular, precious *maxims* to impress on the minds of the children and youth of the household; or a notice of some *recent publication*, of a valuable and pleasing character. The truth is, were ministers as intent on winning the hearts of all the domestic circles which they enter, as the active man of the world is to promote his object wherever he goes, they would enter no dwelling without being received with that smile of pleasure which indicates the most respectful and cordial welcome.—pp. 176 177.

To be welcome in his visits, a minister must carry with him both instruction and entertainment. Ordinary neighbours may fill up an interview with common-place remarks, but more is looked for from him, both as a minister and as a man of cultivation. The humblest family will expect to be profited, and delight to be profited, by the superior intelligence of their minister.

The next three chapters, occupying about a hundred pages, or more than a fifth part of the volume, relate to "habits in the Seminary." As these have, for the most part, no practical interest beyond the Seminary, they might have been omitted with advantage to the work, considering it as intended for general use. There is, however, occasionally a passage, which is of general interest to the ministry. Such is the following:

> Be a close student through life. It is as wonderful as it is humiliating, how entirely habits of study are abandoned by many clerical men, almost as soon as what may be called their initiatory course is closed. From that time, they seem to think it sufficient, if they read and think enough, each week, to address their people twice from the pulpit, on the sabbath, in a common-place way. Thenceforward they make no solid addition to their stock of knowledge. Their minds become lean and inactive. Instead of causing "their profiting to appear unto all," every time they enter the sacred desk, they become more and more jejune and uninteresting. With the habit they lose all taste for study. Their leisure hours are spent in worldly cares, or in gossipping, rather than among their books.—pp. 266, 267.

The consequence is, that by and by, "the world is all before them." They are going from place to place seeking a re-settlement, and complaining of the degeneracy of the age. True, the age is degenerate in respect to the relation between minister and people. The time was, in some parts of our land especially, when the dissolution of that connexion was as great a violence to the habits of the people as the dissolving of the marriage bond. It was a kind of higher species of divorce. Now, however, a minister may be dismissed, from a thousand frivolous causes. Yet it may be always well for him to reflect how far himself may have been the cause of his own removal. If he have given himself intently to his ministry, he may then leave an unreasonable congregation with some degree of comfort. But if he have been indolent *as a minister of the word*,

however diligent in other things:—if he have spent those hours which should have been sacredly given to study, in tilling his patch of ground, or in cultivating his fruit-trees, or even in domestic school-keeping, or in any other employment which was not necessary to his health or his support, he should not lay the blame of his removal wholly at the door of a dissatisfied people. We complain of the habits of the age, but if while the age has grown degenerate, it has out-grown our attainments, the age has not less cause of complaint against us than we against the age.

Moderate attainments, in some instances, are to be attributed to pecuniary want. A poor clergyman has not the means of purchasing books, perhaps not even a few, and is at the same time compelled to resort to some secular employment as a subsidiary means of support. Others are oppressed with uncommon domestic afflictions and cares. But in most cases of poverty of intellect, it is to be laid to the account of mental inactivity. "Much study is a weariness of the flesh." Thought is painful, and books are dull. To such we would take the liberty to recommend a tract of Dr. Macgill: we allude to his Considerations addressed to Clergymen, a work which is worthy to lie familiarly on every minister's table. The chapter on "Indolence," they cannot possibly read with too much attention.

The remaining chapters of the volume embrace the following subjects; namely, "Habits in the pulpit, and in the house of God," "Conduct in church-judicatories;" then the important subjects of "Female society, marriage, &c." which young men will be more likely to read than profit by,—"Dress—style of living—pecuniary concerns," and finally, "Miscellaneous counsels.', These subjects, with the numerous divisions of the author, might furnish us with texts for many pages more of desultory commentary, but we shall not continue it farther.

Respecting the merits of this book different opinions, probably, will be entertained. Some will lay it down with the feeling that the author has gone altogether into too much minuteness and particularity—that some of his topics were too "offensive" to admit of being dwelt upon, and many others too obviously matters of common sense to require grave counsel. Others perhaps may think the work unneeded, the world being already furnished with excellent works of the kind. With neither of these classes should we agree entirely. In respect to other works, we had indeed a number of much value, and some which cannot be superseded by any that will follow them. Burnet's Pastoral Care is rich in valuable sentiments; Baxter's Reformed Pastor, Watt's Rules of Ministerial Conduct, and Doddridge on the Evil of Neglecting Souls, possess the characteristic excellence of their authors; and Macgill's Considerations leave nothing to be added on the particular topics which he handles: we have, besides some valuable collections in "Preacher's Manuals" and "Minister's Companions." None of these tracts, however, nor all of them together, embrace the whole field of Dr. Miller's book. His own view of the need of such a book he gives us in his introduction. "The application of Christian principle to the various departments of social intercourse, in all their interesting and delicate details; in other words, the code of what may be called *Christian morals*, has been less happily illustrated and enforced by books than any other part of Christian truth or duty. In its leading outlines, indeed, it has been often and well exhibited: but the task of minutely filling up what the Scriptures have so divinely sketched, has never yet, unless I

greatly mistake, been satisfactorily performed."

With the other class of critics, who will object to the minuteness of the author, and the unnecessary expansion of some disagreeable topics, as well as of matters of common sense, we partially agree. We think there *is* too great minuteness in the book, and that a number of its topics might have been passed over, or despatched with a passing remark, instead of being severally made the subjects of a formal paragraph. Yet, after all, considering the great variety of characters which the author had in view, the work may meet with individuals to whom its most particular suggestions will not be superfluous; for there are those, from whose apprehension matters of common sense seem to lie as remote as the abstrusest speculations, and within whose observation the manners of their own country appear to fall as little as those of the "celestial empire." Who does not notice, every day, offences against the *plainest* dictates of propriety. Such persons *require* minute suggestions, and common-sense maxims: a less degree of plainness would fail to profit them. Hints are lost upon the obtuse, and it is only to the "wise" that a word is sufficient. Viewing the work in this light, the objection we are considering is diminished; and the first impression of those who make it will, we think, be the least favourable.

From the London Evangelical Magazine.

BARZILLAI, THE GILEADITE; *or Considerations on Old Age; addressed to the Old and the Young. By The Rev. John Cormack, A. M, Minister of Stow.* 18*mo. pp.* 248. 3*s. Oliphant, Edinburgh.*

In our number for February last, we recommended to the favourable attention of our readers, an excellent work on Old Age, by The Rev. Dr. Belfrage, of Falkirk; and we are now happy to introduce to their notice another volume on the same subject, which, from its general excellence and convenient size, merits an extensive circulation. Mr. Cormack evidently possesses a reflective mind; and his remarks on human life, conveyed, as they are, in a familiar and affectionate manner, will, we trust, be found highly beneficial to the old and the young, for whose improvement they are intended. We have been particularly pleased with the sections entitled, "The Aged Disciple enjoying his Provision," and the "Address to the Aged Believer at the Close of Life." From the last of these we give the following quotation, which is calculated to excite joyful feelings in the hearts of our venerable readers:—

"My venerable and aged friend,—It would seem to you that you are done with the world—at least with the power of doing any good in it. Every thing that you see and feel, seems to be the bearer of a message to you from the Lord Jesus, saying, 'Surely I come quickly;' while your soul gladly lays hold of the tidings, and says, 'Amen! even so, come, Lord Jesus.' You frequently feel that 'flesh and heart are fainting and failing;' but you feel, at the same time, that 'God is the strength of your heart; and that he is, and will be, your portion for ever.' And now, aged disciple, my eye follows you to the verge of time. I see guardian angels ready to convey you to the purchased possession. The good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep is there. He is there with his rod and staff, to conduct you safe through the dark valley; and I perceive that you fear no evil. Fear evil?—Nay; that is the note of triumph!—Hark, again! 'O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!—The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!' Aged disciple, depart in peace, and the Lord be with thy spirit! And having employed the later residue of time in teaching the strains of Zion to those you leave behind you; may you find it a sweet and appropriate prelude to the high Hosannas and Hallelujahs of your Heavenly home!"

INTELLIGENCE.

Under this general head, we intend to present to our readers, whatever we may be able to collect, that we may judge profitable, of a religious, domestic, or miscellaneous character; together with a view of public affairs. The information to be communicated on these several subjects, will, of course, be arranged, for distinction's sake, under their respective subordinate heads. In this arrangement, however, we do not deem it material, to maintain perfect uniformity. In this respect, we shall be governed by circumstances; aiming always at furnishing our readers with whatever we may think will prove most acceptable and useful to them. The most important and interesting branch of this department of our work, is what we shall denominate

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE

This will include whatever will be most likely to attract the attention of the friends and followers of the Redeemer; such as, authentic accounts of revivals of religion, either at home or abroad; proceedings of Ecclesiastical Bodies, and of the numerous associations existing in different parts of the world, and especially in our own country, having for their object, the promotion of the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom; accounts of the efforts of Missionaries, whether labouring in Foreign lands, or building up the waste places among ourselves; Ordinations, Installations, and, in one word, whatever, in the shape of information or intelligence, may have a tendency to stimulate the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, to appear openly on the Lord's side, and to act, with increased vigour and resolution, in his service. In communicating information of this character, however, it shall be our aim, to preserve the just medium between that tedious prolixity which generally proves more tiresome than interesting, and that insipid conciseness which furnishes neither instruction nor entertainment. Whether we shall be able herein to succeed, it is not our province to predict; we can only say, that we shall make an honest effort, in this respect, to discharge our duty, both to ourselves and to those who favour us with their patronage. That portion of our present number which is devoted to intelligence is not so full of interesting statements as we could wish. This is owing to the disadvantages under which we necessarily labour in the commencement of our Editorial career; but the difficulties to which we are at present subjected, in common with all others who commence such an undertaking as that in which we have just embarked, we hope soon to surmount; and we take this opportunity of assuring our readers, that, whether, in our future labours, we succeed or fail, we shall not often trouble them with apologies.

Extracts from the Minutes of the Synod of Philadelphia, at their meeting in Harrisburg, Pa. from Oct. 31st to Nov. 2d, 1827.

November 1, 1827.

The committee appointed to devise means for replenishing the treasury of the Synod, recommended that the sum of ninety four dollars should be raised, by an assessment on the Presbyteries, in the following proportions, viz.

The Presbytery of	Philadelphia to pay	$20 00
Do.	New Castle	16 00
Do.	Baltimore	10 00
Do.	Carlisle,	16 00
Do.	Huntingdon,	8 00
Do.	Northumberland,	6 00

Do. District of Columbia, 12 00
Do. Lewes, 6 00

The foregoing report was accepted and adopted; and the Presbyteries under the care of this Synod are hereby required respectively to pay the sums assessed on them, to the Treasurer. Dr. Ely, for defraying the contingent expenses of this Synod.

November 2.

1. *Resolved*, That the Synod hereby express the highest approbation of the magnanimous resolution of the Bible Society of Philadelphia, pledging itself to supply within the space of three years every destitute family in the State of Pennsylvania with a copy of the Scriptures.—They are equally gratified to learn, that a number of the Bible Societies in the State have declared their vigorous co-operation in the measure, particularly the Bible Society of Harrisburg, and the Susquehanna Bible Society, which last has nobly undertaken for four counties. Synod most earnestly and affectionately request and exhort all their ministers and all the congregations under their care to give the measure the support of their influence, their liberality, and their prayers. They further advise and request that an annual collection be taken up in all their congregations in the State of Pennsylvania for three years successively, and applied to this object.

2. *Resolved*, That the above resolution be read by every minister belonging to the Synod in his congregation, and in every vacancy in which he may supply, in which it has not been read before; and accompany the reading by such exhortations as the infinite importance of giving the whole community opportunity of receiving the word of life, may demand.

The Committee to whom was referred the communication of the Philadelphia Branch of the American Tract Society, submitted the following resolutions which were adopted viz:

1. *Resolved*, That this Synod have much confidence in the existing publishing Committee of the said Philadelphia Branch, that no tracts other than such as are sound and edifying will be issued by them; and they do therefore most earnestly recommend to all the congregations under the care of this Synod the formation and vigorous support of tract societies auxiliary to the Philadelphia Branch of the American Tract Society, and would particularly press upon all the members of such societies as are, or may be formed, to use their assiduous efforts, with many prayers for their success in circulating tracts among the population around them, destitute or regardless of religious instruction; as few measures in their opinion promise so much benefit towards rescuing perishing men from ignorance and endless ruin, at so small an expenditure.

2. *Resolved*, That the above resolution be read by every member belonging to the Synod, to his congregation.

The Synod recommend anew to the consideration of the churches under their care, the claims of the *American Society for colonizing free people of colour*. The enterprize in a missionary point of view, as opening a great and effectual door of entrance for the gospel of peace to the degraded millions of Africans, merits richly the prayers and patronage of all who present the petition, "thy kingdom come;" as a means of overthrowing the slave trade; by its moral influence in civilizing and christianizing Africa, and by its commercial influence in doing away those inducements that now exist for carrying on this traffic, the colony is entitled to the best wishes of every philanthropist: and in the existing state of things we do not know of any plan equally rational for promoting domestic emancipation, because it affords to benevolent individuals facilities for liberating their slaves in such a way as cannot injure society, or the interests of slave holders, and promises to benefit the persons emancipated.

From the Calvinistic Magazine.

Extract from the Synod of Tennessee's narrative on the state of Religion.

We should be too tedious for your patience, should we go into a detail of those instances of converting grace, that have been rehearsed from the different sections of the Synod.

We have heard of young persons, who stand around the edges of our congregations, and occasionally interrupt their solemnity by frivolous whispers, drawn by the convictions of the Spirit to the seats of the anxious, and becoming the humble disciples of their Redeemer.

We have heard of an old man between sixty and seventy, deeply alarmed through the ministry of the word, retiring home at night to seek security on his pillow, but unable to pacify the reproaches of conscience, returning the same evening to ask the prayers and counsel of christians, yielding up himself to the mercy of his God, and on the first opportunity establishing the worship of God in his family.

We have heard of a proverbial despiser of religion, now oppressed with the horrors of despair, and now obtaining "a good hope through grace."

We have heard of the avowed disbeliever in revelation, persuaded to abandon his refuge of lies, and embrace the gospel he once hated.

We have heard of the ungodly son of a pious parent; arrested by a fit of sickness, in the career of unbelief and ingratitude, and melted to penitence by his sister's reading of the death of Jesus.

On instances like these, it is natural to remark:

1. That the means of conversion is the same now, as when Paul addressed the awakened jailor, or when Jesus delivered the parable of the sower. It is the simple word of God. We should try, therefore, in all our addresses to the impenitent, not to stun them with our voices, to frighten them with our gestures, or confuse them with the rapidity and indistinctness of our utterance; but to communicate to their understandings, and urge on their consciences, that solid instruction, which we are taught to study from the sacred volume.

2. That the Holy Ghost alone can apply that instruction, with a saving and comforting efficacy on the heart. Therefore, we should seek to cultivate, with this almighty Comforter, that intimacy of intercourse by secret prayer, which will lead us to a constant reliance on his aid, in wielding that weapon, which he condescends to intrust to our feeble instrumentality.

3. That conversion comes not from the choice of the sinner, but from the choice of God. The sinner, instead of choosing it, tried to throw off and escape his convictions. But God chose to convert him of his own kind and sovereign pleasure. Hence we arrive, by the experience of fact, at the same truth which we are taught by Revelation, that "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy."—Therefore, it is our duty, with devout and submissive gratitude, to ascribe to his own electing purpose all the honours of human salvation.

The above striking instances of conversion have been cited, by no means to dishearten the honest christian, whose experience is shaded with different colours, but drawn by the hand of the same Divine Artist. Let him remember, if he has truly the spirit of Christ, it is of little consequence through what channel or process God chose to bestow it. But let him seek to ascertain on satisfactory evidence; that the "same mind be in him, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Extracts from the Minutes of the Synod of North Carolina, at their late Sessions in Salisbury, from the 3d to the 6th of October, 1827.

Oct. 4th, 1827.

A letter was received from The Hon. Henry Potter, as Clerk of the Session of the Church of Fayetteville, enclosing an extract from the Minutes of said Session, referring, for advice, to this Synod, a case of application for membership in said church, of a peculiar character. The letter, and its enclosure, being both read, the extract from the Minutes of the Session, was ordered to be recorded; and is as follows; viz:

"*Church-Session of the Presbyterian Church, of Fayetteville, N. C. August* 31, 1827.

"Whereas Harry, a negro-slave, the property of Mr. Mallett, was, some time ago, propounded to this Session, for membership in our church, and his examination on experimental religion was satisfactory; but it was understood by the Session, and so stated by him, that he had been a member, in full communion, of the Methodist church, and had been thence expelled, for marrying, a second time, while his first wife was living; and for not abandoning his said second wife:—The session, considering the delicacy and importance of the subject, thought it best to suspend their decision, for further inquiry and reflection. They were unwilling, on the one hand, to reject the party, without giving him the benefit of a full investigation; and were desirous, on the other hand, of shewing all due respect and courtesy for the opinions and acts of a sister-church, and of preserving the purity of their own church. And now, after full enquiry, the case presents the following facts: viz—Some years ago, Harry took a wife, in the mode customary among slaves, *without the legal ceremony*. His said wife was a slave, and then lived in this town; but, about two years thereafter, she was recovered, in a suit at law, by a man residing in the State of Georgia; and carried off to that State, where she has ever since lived, and where she still lives. Some short time after her said removal, she took another husband; and informed Harry of the fact. A negro woman, living in New Hanover county, distant hence about ninety miles, and having a husband there,

became the property of Harry's master, who brought her from her husband, to this place. Her said husband then took another wife; and Harry, sometime after the removal hither, of this woman, and after he was informed of the second marriage of her said husband, and also of the second marriage of his own wife, as aforesaid, took the said woman to wife; and has lived with her, as such, ever since; and has had two children by her. For this cause, he was expelled the Methodist church. It further appears, from the representation of the Methodist Brethren and others, that there has been no other impropriety of conduct alledged against Harry; but, that his deportment, in all other respects as far as can be ascertained, has been such as becomes the Christian: that he was greatly distressed at parting with his former wife, and used all the means in his power to prevent the separation; and that, after his said separation, he sued, perseveringly, for some time, for re-admission into his church; but was uniformly told, that the rules of that church excluded him; and that he could not be restored unless he would put away his present wife. This, he alledges, he did not feel it his duty to do; but, feeling a strong desire to mingle with the people of God, and to enjoy the privileges of his church, he was induced to apply to this Session, as aforesaid. In justice to Harry's master, it is proper here to state, that he endeavoured to purchase Harry's first wife, so as to avoid the separation, but could not Now, this being a case of great importance in itself, and still greater in its consequences; and being, as the Session believe, one of *first impression* in our church, the Session are unwilling, by any decision of theirs, to fix a precedent, in this congregation, which might be at variance with the opinions of higher judicatories; and which might prove highly prejudicial, either to the church, or to individuals. They, therefore, beg leave, to refer the whole case, to the Synod of North Carolina, for their ultimate decision. The Session, in this reference, are influenced by the consideration, that the decision of Synod, having an influence of wider spread, and higher authority than that of a Presbytery, would be more likely to produce uniformity of practice, and give satisfaction to the several church-Sessions within their bounds. And, to avail themselves of the opinion of Synod, on this important subject, with the least possible delay, the Session wish to avoid the circuit of carrying the case through Presbytery. The question is, therefore, respectfully submitted. The foregoing Minute was adopted; and the Clerk of the Session was instructed to transmit a copy of it, in a letter, to be by him addressed to the Moderator of Synod.

A true Copy from the Session-Book.
(Signed) H. POTTER, Clk Session.
Sept. 18th, 1827."

After some discussion, the above extract from the Minutes of the Session of the Church of Fayetteville and the letter accompanying it, were referred to The Rev. William McPheeters, D. D. and The Rev. John M. Wilson, with instructions to report thereon, during the present Sessions of Synod.

Oct. 6th, 1827.

The committee, to whom the extract from the Minutes of the Session of the church of Fayetteville, and the letter from The Hon. Henry Potter, accompanying said extract, had been referred, exhibited their report; which being read and considered, was adopted; and ordered to be recorded; and is as follows, viz:

"The committee appointed to report on the reference sent up to Synod, from the Session of the church of Fayetteville, for their opinion and advice, respectfully recommend to Synod, the adoption of the following judgment in this case, viz:

1st. Respecting the separation of Harry from his former wife, it appears evident, from the official document of said Session, that no responsibility lies at his door; for, as to him, this separation was a matter of necessity and not of choice.

2ndly. It appears from the same document, that Harry made no pretensions to marry again, until his wife that had been removed from him, had married another man. In this case, if her marriage was valid, then he had a right to marry another woman; but, if her marringe was not valid, then was she living in a state of adultery, which, according to the laws of God, justified him in putting her away, and marrying another. Substantially the same appears to be the fact, respecting the woman that is now the wife of Harry; and therefore, there is no violation of the laws of God, in their present connexion as man and wife.

3rdly. While Synod would duly appreciate the importance of yielding due respect and courtesy to the opinions and decisions of sister-churches, they would also be duly sensible of the right and necessity, on their own part, of maintaining independent judgment.

Finally, Synod is of the opinion, that the circumstances of this case are not such as ought to throw obstructions in the way of Church-Sessions, in admitting to sealing ordinances. All which is respectfully submitted.

Signed WM. M'PHEETERS,
JOHN M. WILSON,
Committee.

Ordered, that the Stated Clerk furnish the Session of the church of Fayetteville with an attested copy of all the proceedings of this Synod, in the above case.

[The following resolutions have already been published in the Western Carolinian, and, probably also, in some of the other weekly prints of our State; but, as these vehicles of intelligence are very seldom filed, and, perhaps, but very few of them preserved; and as the members of Synod, and some of the Ruling Elders and members of our churches will, in all probability, wish to have their memories refreshed, in relation to the matters here referred to, we think it expedient, although they may not be new to all our readers, to give them a place in our miscellany.]

It having been stated to the Synod, that there has been formed, within the bounds, and under the patronage of the Presbytery of Orange, a society for the circulation of religious books, *therefore Resolved*, That this Synod has heard with much pleasure, of the formation of a society, under the patronage of the Presbytery of Orange for the circulation of religious books; and they do most cordially recommend it to the countenance and support of the Ministers and congregations under their care.

Resolved, That this Synod recommend to all their Ministers, Ruling-Elders, and Members of their churches, to unite, until the next meeting of Synod, in a concert of secret prayer, for the out-pouring of the Spirit of God, on our Colleges and other seats of learning, our Theological Seminaries, our Benevolent Societies, our Ministers, and our Congregations, on every Saturday evening, at 8 o'clock.

The Synod of North Carolina, from long observation, feeling deeply impressed with the great importance of Sunday-School institutions; and convinced of the important effects they are calculated to produce on the rising generation, do hereby earnestly recommend to the friends of Zion within their bounds, the formation of Sunday-School Unions, for each county in the State;—auxiliary to "The American Sunday-School Union," which holds its Sessions in the City of Philadelphia. To this end,

Resolved, That The Rev. Messrs. Colin McIver and James G. Hamner, and The Hon. Henry Potter, be a committee, to draft such Form of a Constitution, as may be expedient for such societies to adopt; and to publish an address, furnishing the community with such explanations and directions as may be proper for directing the public mind, and exciting public exertion, on this subject.

Resolved, That each Presbytery belonging to this Synod, shall, hereafter, at its meetings immediately preceding each meeting of the Synod, either cause a written report on the state of religion and other topics connected therewith, to be prepared and forwarded to Synod, or appoint a member, or two or more members of its body, who shall represent the Presbytery, in the free conversation on these subjects, usually called for by the Synod:—which member, or members, shall, as far as practicable, be put in possession of all that is interesting, touching the state of religion, and other topics connected therewith, within the bounds of the Presbytery, to which he, or they, may belong:—and the persons so appointed by the respective Presbyteries, and *they alone*, shall be called on, by Synod, to communicate to that Body, what is important to be known on the subjects aforesaid:—unless the Synod should judge it advisable, at any time, to solicit further information from individual members, who may be supposed to be in possession of interesting facts, not before communicated.

Resolved, That this Synod will highly disapprove of the conduct of any of their members, who may leave the place of the Sessions of this Body, on the Sabbath day, for the purpose of commencing his journey homeward, without obvious necessity.

Resolved, That it be recommended to our Sessions, and to the friends of Zion in general, to take into serious and prayerful consideration, the worthy example set before the Christian public, by the Bible societies of Monroe county, New York, and Nassau Hall, New Jersey. The object of this resolution is, to induce benevolent institutions and individuals, not to limit their exertions to any section of our country; but to introduce a higher degree of method and certainty, in their operations. For instance:—Let any person, or number of persons, so disposed, agree to supply, with copies of the

Holy Scriptures, in any given time, every family, within a given region.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Stated Clerks of each Presbytery, to prepare a list of the Ministers, churches, number of members, and benevolent societies; and of the different religious denominations, within their bounds, and forward the same to the resident Agent of the North Carolina Book Company, for the purpose of insertion in the Christian Almanac for 1829; and also, for the purpose of enabling the Students of our Theological Seminary to form a Missionary Map of the State.

Resolved, That, in the free conversation on the State of Religion, held by the Synod, at its regular meetings, particular inquiry be always made respecting the state of religion in the Seminary; and that if no Professor of the Institution should be present on such occasions, a particular report be forwarded to Synod, on this important subject:—And further, *Resolved*, that it be earnestly enjoined on the Presbyteries under the care of this Synod, to pay particular attention to the improvement, in holiness, of the Candidates for the Ministry, under their care.

ORDINATION.

On Friday, the 4th inst. at M'Pherson's Church, about four miles from this place, the Presbytery of Fayetteville ordained, to the work of the Gospel Ministry, as an Evangelist, The Rev. ABNER W. GAY.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

From the Christian Advocate.

EUROPE.

The latest dates which we have seen from Britain are of the 23d of October, and from France of the 22d of the same month. From no quarter have we events or information of much importance, to chronicle at this time.

BRITAIN.—The British Parliament has been further prorogued till the end of December, which will put off the actual sessions till February—It is the usage of Parliament always to adjourn for the holidays. There has been some fluctuation in the publick stocks, in consequence of rumours of war with Turkey, and the contradiction of these rumours. The revenue for the last quarter of the year, ending Oct. 10th, exceeded that of the correspondent quarter last year, to the amount of £600,000; yet the whole revenue of the present year was less than that of the last by £300,000. The subject which seemed most to occupy the public attention was, the surplus population of the three kingdoms, particularly of Ireland. It seemed to be agreed on all hands, that pauperism must continue and increase, unless the population should be materially reduced by emigration; and plans were preparing to apply this remedy. Commerce and business had nearly reached their usual level.

FRANCE.—We observe nothing of more national importance in the secular concerns of France, than her vigorous and successful efforts to increase her navy. It is estimated that in January next, she will have afloat 39 ships of the line, 35 frigates and 194 smaller vessels. It is said that 170 vessels are now in service.—Algiers is closely blockaded, and the squadron there has been reinforced. The ecclesiastical state of France is one which for us has much interest. Both Catholicks and Protestants are using all the means in their Power, and with great zeal, to propagate their opinions each in opposition to the other. We know not how this conflict will terminate; but it seems to us that unless the Protestants are restrained by the strong hand of power, they are likely, although a small minority at present, to produce ere long a great change in the religious state of France. Indeed we see not how liberalism and Protestantism can be permitted to remain as they are, and especially to increase as they are likely to do, and yet Popery and absolute power hold the places and the tone which they now hold in this kingdom.

SPAIN.—It is stated with apparent authenticity, that the presence of king Ferdinand among his rebellious subjects, in the north-eastern part of his dominions, has been, to a considerable extent, effectual in recalling and compelling them to return to their allegiance. Some have voluntarily laid down their arms, and some have been subdued by force, and the rest have betaken themselves to the mountains in their vicinity—Such are the accounts. It would seem that a principal cause of this rebellion was, the belief that Ferdinand was a captive, and not permitted to act agreeable to his own will. His presence among the deluded would of course correct this mistake. The circumstance is distinctly adverted to in a poem, which the queen has written on the departure of her husband. We have seen a prose translation of this poem, and it is really pretty well done *for a queen*.

PORTUGAL.—It seems yet doubtful whether the emperor of Brazil is or is not, favourable to the accession of his brother Don Miguel, to the throne of Portugal. The last accounts represent him as actually appointed; but there has been so much of pro and con in relation to this matter, that the truth must be left to time. Very arbitrary measures have lately been adopted without his presence.—What they will be if he should hold the sceptre, may easily be anticipated. This kingdom is in a very unsettled and unhappy state.

AUSTRIA.—This great power seems to have pursued a mysterious kind of policy in relation to the Turks and Greeks. She has favoured the Turks and injured the Greeks as much as she conveniently could, through the whole of the late struggle. From late appearances we should suppose she is strongly inclined still to pursue the same course; but is overawed by the combination of Russia, France and Britain, for the pacification of Greece.

TURKEY AND GREECE.—The latest accounts received in Paris from St. Petersburg state, that the Grand Senior had absolutely and finally refused the mediation proffered by the allied powers, for settling his controversy with the Greeks. Still we consider this article of news as wanting confirmation. What seems to be authentic is, that the fleets of Britain and France (that of Russia is at Napoli,) have actually blockaded the sea ports of Greece occupied by the Turks, and given the Ottoman commanders, both of the land and naval forces, to understand that all military operations must cease. A Turkish frigate that attempted to escape, received a broadside from a British ship of war, and was compelled to put back. The combined fleet appears to have come in good time for the poor Greeks, as a reinforcement from Egypt, of from four to six thousand troops, had arrived and landed at Navarino. The Greeks have joyfully accepted the proposed mediation; yet it appears that Adm. Cochrane was prosecuting the war and with considerable success, in the vicinity of Missolonghi. He will, however, be compelled to desist. Since we began to write this article, we have seen a paragraph from a New York paper, in which it is said, on information received "from a responsible source through a *respectable* medium," that "there is an express *agreement* (not an *understanding*) entered into by *England*, *Russia*, and *France*, to conquer and portion the *Turkish* dominions in *Europe* and *Africa*. *Constantinople*, and its dependencies, are allotted to Russia—*Egypt* to England, and the isles of the Mediterranean, and some portion of the land adjoining that Sea, to France. The Turk is to be driven into Asia, and the Greeks are to have a government of their own, under the guarantee and protection of the *three powers*." We consider this information too apocryphal to make any other remark upon it than that if it should prove true, it will well explain the conduct of Austria—She would rather have the Turk for a near neighbour than Russia.

[Since the above was in type, we have perused several extracts from the London Gazette, of the 10th of Nov. last, including an authentic account of a signal victory obtained by Vice Admiral Sir Edward Codrington, over the Turkish and Egyptian fleet, under the command of Ibrahim Pacha, the result of which was, the entire annihilation of the Turko-Egyptian fleet. For the details of this sanguinary engagement, we must refer our readers to the political journals of the day.] —*Edit. Mus.*

RUSSIA.—It appears that a new levy of troops, very large in amount, has recently been made in the Russian empire. The war is still carried on successfully against the Persians, and is probably near a close. The Persians we think will be willing to obtain peace by relinquishing the disputed territory; and much more than this Russia, at least for the present, is not likely to demand. Britain will not readily consent to the subjugation of Persia, which now forms a safe barrier to her East India possessions.

ASIA.

In every part of British India, we rejoice to observe that the missionary cause (in our estimation the best and most important of all causes) is prosperous: and the prospect for the future, seems to be even more cheering than the prosperity of the present. There are not less than four or five different denominations of Protestants that have missionary establishments in India; and they are all harmonious and successful in their operations. It is indeed, as yet, but a small part of the vast population of this multitudinous region, that is brought under the influence of sacred truth. But plans and means are in train to Christianize the whole—The Lord hasten it in his own best time and way!

AFRICA.

It appears from the last number of the

African Repository, that the American Colony at Cape Montserado, is in a most prosperous and promising state. We think the point is now decided, that the establishment of an American colony there is practicable, and in the highest degree desirable and useful—whether it be, or be not, viewed as a depository for our slave and coloured population. We hope the state legislatures and the general government, will not much longer withhold their patronage from this noble enterprize of benevolence. In the mean time, private liberality has every encouragement to sustain the work which it has commenced, and under many discouragements continued. It is with great pleasure, that we perceive that two missions are soon to be sent to Liberia—one from the American Board, and the other from the Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church.

AMERICA.

Brazil and Buenos Ayres.—In our last number we stated that there was a prospect that peace would soon be concluded between these belligerents. That prospect seems to have vanished. The last accounts represent both parties as preparing to renew the war with increased vigour.

Mexico.—An editorial article in the National Gazette says, "We have before us Mexican Gazettes of a late date. The contents indicate great uneasiness and discord, almost throughout the Republic. Barbarous excesses had been committed with impunity against the Spanish inhabitants in and noar Acapulco, and seemed to be threatened in other places. The cry for blood has been raised in some of the gazettes, and in the Congress, in a way that shocks the North American reader. Much embarrassment was experienced by the government in the treasury department."

Colombia.—The state of Colombia is not far different from that of Mexico.—The liberator Bolivar, however, appears to possess much of the public confidence, and to be labouring to restore harmony, order and prosperity.

Canada.—A serious difference has taken place between the governor of this British colony and the legislature. The Commons House of Parliament have chosen a speaker, whom the governor absolutely refuses to recognise in that character,—and the Commons seem equally determined to persist in their choice. How the controversy will terminate, remains to be seen.

United States.—The Congress of these States convened on the 3d instant. We write on the 5th, when none of its proceedings, nor the message of the President, have yet met our view. If they demand the notice of the Christian Advocate, such notice may be expected in our next number. In the mean time, we do hope that our readers, and the Christian public at large, will be impressed with the importance of the duty of offering up prayer—not cursory and formal—but sincere, and earnest, and particular prayer—for the Divine blessing, both on the legislature and governmental officers of the union, and on those of the particular States. The Christian who neglects this duty has no right to complain of Congress and the government.

To Readers and Correspondents.

Although we have, in the introduction to our Miscellany, announced our willingness to be responsible for every sentiment to which we may give publicity, yet we judge it proper, to produce the authority by which we publish, in all instances in which we give the sentiments or language which others have given to the world before us. Accordingly, our readers will perceive, that, in this, our first number, we have invariably announced the several works, from whence our selections have been taken. In the course of our acquaintance with newspapers and other periodical works, we have known some of our brethren to complain very heavily, and we must add, justly too, that the productions of their pens, were unceremoniously transferred to the columns of others, without due acknowledgment. We hope none of them will ever have cause to charge *us* with a similar offence. We think such liberties, to say the least of them, ungenerous; and therefore, it shall be our aim, in this, as well as in all other respects, to "do unto others as we would they should do unto us."

We are in possession of some original communications, which we intend hereafter to publish; and for which we are thankful to our correspondents. For the present, however, we reserve them; as we wish to ascertain, from the complexion which our subscription-list may assume, some few weeks hence, what judgment our readers may form of our *selections*, before we venture to offer them much that is *original*. We respectfully solicit the further favours of our correspondents.